PARTITION AND AFTERMATH

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MEMOIRS OF AN AMBASSADOR

KEWAL SINGH

VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD

VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD
576 Masjid Road, Jangpura, New Delhi 110014

Second Reprint 1992

Printed at Hindustan Offset Printers, Delhi-32 (INDIA)

Dedicated To
My wife Shamie,
whose love and devotion
made every day of my life blissful
and
Our daughter Gita
and
her children,
Vikram and Anita

Preface

My life started in 1915 in the small village of 54 G.B. Lyallpur District, in a remote part of the West Punjab. G.B. stood for Gogera Branch, the irrigation canal on which No. 54 was situated. With the introduction of the canal irrigation system from the river headworks, hundreds of such villages had been encouraged by the British to develop the agricultural lands. The town nearest to my village, with the secondary school was five miles away. There was no means of public transport.

Life in my village was peaceful and happy. The people were generally well off, and shared a strong sense of community. Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims lived in complete harmony, and I cannot recall a single incident of communal tension, or any criminal activity, in the entire area. Here in this rural and tranquil setting I spent the happy days of my childhood. I was later to leave to attend the Forman Christian College, and the Law College, in Lahore, the Punjab's capital city. But I always looked forward to returning to my rural habitat for short visits and long holidays. My family remained in this village until August 1947 when they, like so many others, had to flee as refugees after the partition of the subcontinent and the communal holocaust that followed.

Although I was destined to traverse almost all the cultural oceans of the world, the first three decades of my life were spent in the Punjab. I first travelled abroad in 1938-39 to attend the University of Oxford, but returned to the Punjab as a member of the Indian Civil Service, and remained there until 1947 in administrative posts in four important districts. Thirty years of life spent in this homeland had left many cherished memories of the educational and cultural inspirations, of friends in every walk of life—educationists, publicmen, administrators and political leaders—and, above all, the persistent sense of belonging.

After India attained independence, I joined the Indian Foreign Service, and went on to represent my country as her ambassador to twelve countries, including Pakistan, the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States. But throughout my diplomatic career, and wherever I was posted, I followed with intense interest developments within Pakistan, and the ups and downs of Indo-

Pakistan relations. Of course, I was most intimately involved when I was High Commissioner to Pakistan (1965-66), Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (1968-70), and Foreign Secretary (1972-76). But even when posted abroad, I kept myself fully informed through regular dispatches from the Ministry, and via discussions with India's political leaders and officials during my visits to India. This was further supplemented, during my years as secretary and Foreign Secretary, by a thorough study of earlier official documents dealing with Pakistan. Finally, throughout my career I maintained a personal diary, and that record has helped in writing these memoirs.

In many ways, my thirty-year personal involvement with what would become Pakistan in 1947, and my rather intimate experience with Pakistan over the next three decades, were quite unique and poignant. Understandably, I experienced a natural urge to share my reminiscences with Indians and Pakistanis, and others interested in the subcontinent. Over the years, many friends have urged me to do so.

This persuasion intensified when I spent a year at the University of California-Los Angeles in 1980 as Regents' Lecturer. During that period I received much encouragement from Professors Richard Sisson and Bala Sardesai of UCLA, and from Professors Bajpai and Ram Roy of the States University of California, Northridge. My friend, Professor Suzanne Hening from San Diego even presented me with a costly tape recorder in the hope that I would dictate my memoirs. But to the disappointment of all, I resisted, giving the excuse that my lectures at the universities left too little time for writing my memoirs.

A friendship with Senator John Sherman Cooper dating back to the 1950s and the close relations we had when I was Ambassador to Washington, resulted in an invitation from the University of Kentucky to serve as a visiting professor. It was there that I began, in earnest, the preparation of these memoirs. I am indebted to many for the support, facilities, and encouragement I received at the University of Kentucky. President Otis Singletary accorded me a warm welcome and was always very gracious to make my stay happy and successful. He provided me every facility so that I could give my best to the University which I hope I did. Chancellor Art Gallaher helped and encouraged me in every way year after year and I shall always cherish grateful memories of that. As a mark of the generous appreciation of my association with the University of Kentucky, the President and the Chancellor conferred on me the honorary degree of Doctorate of Laws in 1987.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Department of Political Science and to the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce for extending to me every courtesy and consideration as a Visiting

Professor. But for the constant encouragement of Professor Vincent Davis, the Director of the Patterson School, I doubt if I would have been able to apply myself to writing these memoirs in addition to the work relating to the weekly seminars. Professor Davis is one of those rare individuals who is both utterly dedicated to his administrative and professional responsibilities, and also ever generous and inspiring to his colleagues and his students.

Another friend at the University of Kentucky who always encouraged me, and helped me with his advice, was Professor George Gadbois, a specialist on South Asia. He keeps abreast of developments in South Asian politics, and has published remarkable research dealing with the Indian Supreme Court. Given his knowledge of South Asian affairs, I had countless valuable exchanges of views with him. I hasten to add, however, that the views expressed herein on various Indo-Pakistan issues are my own.

My friend Rajinder Sarin, the well-known journalist of India, kindly read the entire draft carefully and made many valuable suggestions. He is one of the few people who have a thorough knowledge of all the developments since the days of partition. Through intensive study and frequent visits to Pakistan, where he has a large number of friends, his knowledge of Indo-Pakistan relations is very impressive and uptodate. What surprised me was that on the spur of the moment, he corrected the names of some twenty places and persons from pre-partition days—names of which I should have known better. Useful and highly appreciated editorial suggestions were also made by Professor Suzanne Hening of San Diego, and Peggy Sud (wife of Raja Sud) of New Delhi. Another eminent journalist, Inder Malhotra, for whom I have always had warm regard, gladly offered, in spite of heavy pressures of his own work, to read the whole manuscript. He made a number of valuable suggestions which I gratefully accepted.

Two people who helped me with the typing deserve special mention. The major portion of the typing was done by Helen Elam, who had just retired from the Lexington (Kentucky) IBM plant. I met her, thanks to the kind assistance of my friend, Dr. Kailash Joshi, who was then the Managing Director of the IBM plant. Helen impressed me greatly with her punctuality, willingness to work long hours, and her proficiency. The other was Betty Pasley of the Political Science Department. In spite of her own heavy responsibilities in the department, she would smilingly accept additional typing work which I imposed upon her only too frequently. She was a real help, and I am grateful to her for that. In India, N.K. Ratti spent long hours for months to type my hand written notes and retype frequency changes in the drafts. Lastly, I deeply

appreciate the much needed help which Arthur Monteiro extended to me to reduce and abridge the manuscript by subediting every page in consultation with me. This had been necessary to meet the wishes of the publishers. It was not easy for me to eliminate so many cherished personal memories and captivating events which Monteiro successfully persuaded me to do.

Finally, I would like to say that the views expressed in these memoirs are entirely personal and objective to the best of my knowledge. If to some I sound at all critical of Pakistan at times, it could never be for lack of my goodwill and affection for Pakistan and its people.

KEWAL SINGH

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Prologue

From Oxford University to District Administration in the Punjab

Within twenty-four hours after Britain declared war on September 3, 1939, I received at the Balliol College (Oxford University) a brief secret message from the office of the Secretary of State for India, London, advising me to reach Southampton port within two days to sail on the *Empress of Australia* for home assignment as a member of the Indian Civil Service; the name of the ship, the port of embarkation and the date of departure were to be kept strictly confidential. I passed on the news of my immediate departure to my tutors and to a few friends at the college and did some essential shopping and packing. Already, the city and the University community were reeling under the shock of the outbreak of war among the great European powers, apprehending the danger of the German air force resorting to reckless bombing of the English cities. The whole country and the defence forces had been put on immediate alert.

It was painful leaving Oxford at two days' notice in these sad circumstances. I had basked happily in its renowned academic and cultural environment and had made many friends. This chapter was closing suddenly, with no time even to bid good-bye to my dear friends in Oxford and London.

Gloom pervaded the city and the college. In the evening six of my Balliol friends, as usual, gathered for tea in the Senior Common Room. The state of war with Germany hung heavy on their minds, with forebodings of untold disasters for Europe and England. Admiringly, I observed the typical English undertone of intrepidity, but little did any of us realize that the spirit of the British would be tested almost to a breaking point, and that, confronted with the very survival of the nation's independence during the London blitzkrieg, Prime Minister Churchill would be called upon to make his "blood, toil, tears and sweat" speech to his people.

The tea was forgotten in some vituperative discussion of how Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had surrendered to Hitler's demand for the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia: precisely a year earlier having naively presumed that he had secured "peace in our time" with Hitler. Most of us at the Balliol College had been shocked by the 1938 Munich Agreement even though the nation generally had breathed a sigh of relief that the threat of war had been averted.

Back in my room the scenes of September 1938 came rushing to mind. Britain and France were then in the grip of shock and panic as a result of Hitler's thunderous threats to march his armies immediately into Czechoslovakia to claim the Sudetenland. Mussolini had backed his demand to the hilt with his crude and blatant harangue at Trieste. Europe was on the brink of war. Prime Minister Chamberlain flew thrice to Germany within a fortnight to meet Hitler at Berchtesgaden, Godesberg and finally in Munich. Chamberlain and Premier Deladier of France agreed to concede Hitler's demand on Sudetenland and accordingly informed President Benes of Czechoslovakia, who had all along shown iron nerves to oppose the dismemberment of his country. Czechoslovakia's sell-out agreement was signed at Munich by Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Deladier.

Memory rankled at how the vast London crowds hailed Chamberlain as a hero when he arrived at the Heston Airport from Munich, waving in his hand the four-power pact, and pleased with his "victory" in the negotiations with Hitler, he proudly said: "If you do not succeed at first, try, try, try again." The swarms of Londoners, swelling outside Buckingham Palace when Chamberlain appeared on the balcony with the King and the Queen, were even more excited and enthusiastic in their acclamation of him for saving the nation from impending war.

The Treasury benches in Parliament supported him with the exception of Duff Cooper who protested strongly and resigned as Cabinet Minister. The opposition leaders were, however, bitterly critical. Herbert Morrison condemned the agreement as a betrayal of a brave people, a peace without honour and surrender to Fascism. Clement Attlee cursed it as a victory for brute force, the defeat of democracy and the destruction of a gallant people. Hitler, he said, was the master of Europe and the methods of force had triumphed.

In Oxford, feelings ran high against the Munich Agreement, especially at the Balliol College. The president of the Oxford Union, Edward Heath, had organized a debate with the theme, "In the opinion of this House, the Munich agreement was a peace without honour," in which two or three members of Parliament also participated. The Oxford Union debates, marked by decorum, humour and razor-sharp

thrust of argument, were always a highly stimulating experience. This one on the Munich agreement was certainly the best I ever attended at Oxford. Edward Heath, always admired for his oratory, outdid himself that evening. Nevertheless, hardly would anyone have suspected that evening that he would one day become the Prime Minister of Great Britain. That was a politically vintage year for the Balliol College. Three others of my contemporaries and personal friends who became Cabinet Ministers were Denis Healey, Christopher Mayhew and Julien Amery.* As Deputy High Commissioner in London during 1962-65, I was personally pleased and professionally gratified to have three close and respected friends as Cabinet Ministers, with Denis Healey as Defence Secretary.

Having occupied Sudetenland by October 10, 1938, in accordance with the Munich Agreement, Hitler then occupied the whole of Czechoslovakia in the middle of March 1939. He disdainfully ignored his commitment under the Munich Agreement and treated with scorn the British and French guarantees to Czechoslovakia. Mussolini meanwhile had declared Libya as part of Italy. Reminiscing in my room that evening, I realized how Hitler's invasion of Poland and the British declaration of war had fulfilled the dire prophecies that had been addressed to us at the Oxford Union and at many other forums after the Munich Agreement a year before.

These were the scenes of the past year that were passing before my mind's eyes on the eve of my departure from Oxford. The next day, I packed my baggage and went to see two of my professors and a few friends at the Trinity, Christchurch and St. John's Colleges. I left by the evening train for Southampton where I boarded the *Empress of Australia*. The ship, at one time a luxury liner, was now crowded with civil and military officers leaving hurriedly to take up their duties in India, Australia and other British colonies in the East. The boat was escorted by a convoy of warships: German submarines were already chasing British ships in the Atlantic and were suspected of having reached the Mediterranean Sea. The previous day, even before the

* Julien's father, L.S. Amery, who was in 1939 one of the top leaders of the Conservative party in the House of Commons, launched a blistering attack on Prime Minister Chamberlain after the British declaration of war. In May 1940, during the course of his speech in the House of Commons and pointing at Chamberlain, he quoted Cromwell's words when turning out the Long Parliament: "You have been sitting too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go." Later when Winston Churchill formed his War Cabinet, L.S. Amery succeeded Lord Zetland as Secretary of State for India.

declaration of war a German U-boat had sunk the British ship *Athenia* off the Irish coast.

The ship ran a slow zigzag course and was blacked out at night. On two occasions a destroyer fired depth charges in the ocean shaking every ship of the convoy. Once in the Mediterranean, the tension ebbed. In the four weeks that the voyage to Bombay took I had ample time to read and to reflect on the happenings of the past years and the hopes of the future.

Entry into the ICS and Studies at the Balliol

In those days my thoughts reverted to the extremely fortunate circumstances which had made it possible for me to go to Oxford University from a small village in the Punjab. As a graduate student at Forman Christian College, Lahore, in 1934, I had entertained the ambition to compete for the Indian Civil Service, which was considered the most prestigious service. At one time reserved for the British, the service was by then nearly 50 per cent Indian. Entry to the service was strictly by competitive examinations held in England and India. Considering that only a few of the 700 applicants were selected after the all-India written competition and a *viva voce*, it seemed a distant dream for me. After a couple of years' unremitting hard work at my studies, I appeared in the competition at New Delhi in January 1938. I had little hope that I would make it, even after I was called for the *viva voce* with some 150 others. Since hardly half a dozen candidates were to be selected, I decided to put my law degree to use by starting my legal practice in the neighbouring town.

One evening in early June, some of us were sitting under the banyan tree near the village well, which used to be the assembly place for the villagers, when a peasant and a shopkeeper, who were returning from the nearby market town of Jaranwala, hailed us. The shopkeeper said that he had heard some good news about me, to the effect that my name and address had been in the newspapers announcing that I had achieved a high post in the British service. Kindly, they had brought along the relevant Urdu newspaper. Thus, the news from New Delhi, which was obviously published in all the English papers in the country, reached me in my small village through a vernacular newspaper. The whole village, a closely knit community, was jubilant.

By next day, there were a few telegrams from friends but the official communication came ten days later. When the detailed results came from New Delhi, I found that of the 700 candidates who had competed for the five vacancies, I was lucky enough to be the fourth. In the

personal interview also, I was one of the two who had got 280 marks out of 300. Soon thereafter, I was summoned to Lahore, the capital of the Punjab state, for briefing for our departure and to arrange our passage to London.

Confident and enthusiastic, I expressed my preference for Oxford University and Balliol College, despite the Chief Secretary's caution that admission to the latter was usually impossible for the ICS probationers. Apart from what I had read about the college, I had heard high praise of it from two highly distinguished Indian alumni of the Balliol, Kanwar Sir Maharaj Singh (who was later to become Governor of Bombay) and H.S. Malik, the seniormost ICS officer in India. A limerick on Benjamin Jowett, one-time Master of the college, which ran:

My name is Benjamin Jowett
And I am the Master of the Balliol College
All that's worth knowing, I know it
And what I do not know isn't knowledge

also kept ringing in my head. On arrival in London, I learnt from the India Office that I had been admitted to the Balliol College.

London was exhilarating. We, the five ICS probationers, had arrived there from Bombay in mid-August, after three weeks of voyage by the P and O liner, *S.S. Naldera*. We were swept off our feet by the vastness and prosperity of the city, its historical sites, the Westminster Abbey, the House of Parliament and other places that had until then lain dormant in our textbooks. India had more than its fair share of arrogant and aloof Englishmen, but the people of London and later Oxford truly made us feel at home. Since the ICS was a Covenanted Service, a formal agreement had to be signed between the British Government and the new entrant to the Service specifying the mutual obligations. I signed the Covenant while Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, signed on behalf of the British Government. Some 'must's in our shopping list in London were a dinner jacket for formal dinners at the University and a riding kit—breeches and riding boots. An ICS probationer had to pass a stiff riding test at the London Police School before returning to India.

At Oxford, apart from the studies in the special courses for the ICS, I devoted considerable time to the study of political science and economics. In sports, I was selected for the college hockey team and played in intercollegiate matches as well as in some matches in Cambridge.

One of my Oxford memories is the parliamentary by-election from Oxford in October 1938, soon after the Munich Agreement, when the Master of the Balliol College, A.D. Lindsay, was contesting against Quinton Hogg. How enthusiastically we from the Balliol campaigned all over the city for our Master! We even coined the slogan: "If you want Hitler to win, vote for Quinton Hogg." But to our chagrin, Quinton Hogg won. (Many years later, when I went to London as Deputy High Commissioner, I had to pay my respects to Quinton Hogg, then Lord Hailsham, Cabinet Minister in Harold Macmillan's Cabinet.)

I also found time for travel. During a fifteen-day visit to Rome, Venice, Florence and Milan, my friend Leslie Johnson proved an invaluable companion in organizing visits to the Vatican and main cathedrals, art galleries and historical places in various cities. The high point of our tour was to have been La Scala in Milan. Dressed in dinner jackets, we took our seats waiting excitedly for the opera to begin. The dignified audience and the spectacular opening scene momentarily enchanted us, but the great Wagner's music was a let-down for two young Indians whose acquaintance with western music until then had been limited to jazz dance tunes: we found the music loud, monotonous and, in a word, insufferable. Back in Oxford, when I mentioned our experience to my tutor, he said candidly that as a newcomer to western classical music, I could not have made a worse choice than Wagner's "Siegfried." That, however, was a false start. Soon I began to relish the beauties of western classical music and began collecting the tapes of all the great operas.

A fortnight-long tour of Paris, Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo was largely uneventful, but my tour of Germany of more than ten days as a member of the Asian hockey team from Oxford and Cambridge Universities was noted for what we saw of the ubiquitous German militarism. We played matches against the German teams in Jena, Hannover, Heidelberg, Frankfurt and Munich. Swastika banners fluttered everywhere, and even little boys and girls donned military uniforms. Everywhere we heard the rallying call of "Heil Hitler!" At every evening reception for our team, the hosts were mostly uniformed people who in their speeches aimed at praising India and glorifying Nazism.

District Administration and the Political Leadership in the Punjab

My first assignment in India was in the Ferozepur district, in my home province, as Assistant Commissioner. From the rather grey September of London and Oxford, the Punjab with its prosperous, verdant villages, irrigation channels and golden sunshine was a heartwarming homecoming. Few jobs would have been more interesting and satisfying in those days than that of a District Commissioner. He was head of the executive, the magistracy, the police administration and the revenue collection departments. He had, in addition, to administer the municipalites and the District Board with elected representatives from the rural areas. Even more interesting were the programmes of economic development and social welfare for the nearly one million people in a district. Vast, indeed, was the concentration of powers in the representative of the British Government at the district level. Since he had to travel at least ten days to small towns and rural areas on official duty, the officer remained in constant touch with the people and their local leaders and usually developed a close and satisfying relation with them.

After a couple of years' experience, what impressed me most was the efficient functioning of the democratic and responsible Government in the Punjab, albeit with very limited franchise. The Unionist party commanded a preponderant majority in the Provincial Assembly. Sir Fazli-Hussain, one of its founders, was a leader of remarkable political acumen and sincere dedication to public service, who would be remembered for laying the strong basis for political democracy and secularism in the Punjab. He opposed Unionist members joining the Muslim League, which he considered as a communal party. His successor, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, though highly respected, failed to take an upright stand on this issue and, by signing the Sikander-Jinnah pact, allowed Unionist members to have dual membership of the Muslim League as well. Sir Sikander was premier in 1939, later succeeded by Sir Khizar Hayat Khan in 1942. Their Cabinets included highly respected leaders of different communities, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. The party was very popular with its secular and economic programmes, and was pledged to economic development in the province with special emphasis on the welfare of peasants. The Cabinet Minister, Sir Chhotu Ram, was the driving force behind the programmes and legislation for the betterment of the rural classes. Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, unlike his predecessor, was utterly opposed to mixing religion with politics and wanted the Unionist party to adhere

strictly to its secular principles and programmes. In his days, a member could not join the Muslim League except after resigning from the Unionist party.

The districts in which I served for the first five years gave no evidence of any significant support for the Congress or for the Muslim League. While the movement for national independence led by the Congress had swept all over the country including the masses, and the "Quit India" agitation had led to widespread public demonstrations and the arrest of the top Congress leaders all over India, the political scene in the West Punjab was quite unruffled. The name of the Muslim League was barely known yet. It was the Unionist party, serving the vast population with its economic and secular programmes in the rural constituencies, which held sway. Though most of its leaders represented the feudal aristocracy and other vested interests, the party was seriously devoted to the welfare of the masses and the leaders were respected for their urbane culture and integrity. While the Congress movement throughout the country was opposing British rule and had launched a non-cooperation movement until independence was promised, the Unionist party, secure in its own regional base, maintained friendly relations with the British, supported the British war effort and waited for independence to arrive by an evolutionary process decided upon by hard negotiations with the British rather than through an open struggle or non-cooperation. An indication of the British patronage for these leaders was that almost all the top leaders had been conferred Knighthood by the British King, which was, indeed, a singular honour. Thus we had Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Sir Manohar Lal, Sir Chhotu Ram and Sir Sahabud Din.

During those years, the emerging national issue was whether there should be an Indian federation or partition of the country. The Unionist party was unequivocally opposed to the two-nation theory. The Muslim Premier, Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, commanded the wide support of the Muslim and non-Muslim population and stood firmly for the unity of the Punjab and of India.

In 1944, I was selected for an immensely interesting and sought-after job, quite unlike the normal district administration. The post was called Colonization Officer of Nilibar Colony, a vast stretch of some 3,000 square miles, in the districts of Montgomery and Multan. The concept of colonizaton was started by the British administration six or seven decades earlier with a view to bring under cultivation barren lands in the West Punjab which were undeveloped and underpopulated. It meant bringing irrigation channels from the river headworks to these

areas, planning rail and road communications through their length and breadth and charting out villages and market towns with all necessary amenities. Initially, the work entailed a fantastic exercise outlining on paper the course of the irrigation canals, subsidiary channels and railway lines and demarcating specified areas for scores of towns and thousands of villages with detailed plans for shops, schools, houses and agricultural plots in every town and village. Thereafter, and by stages, people from other populated districts in the East Punjab would come and settle down in the villages planned for them. For the first settlers, it must have been a very arduous job to start from scratch in the jungles beginning by clearing the land, laying down roads, and irrigation channels and building up houses. But as time passed, people in these colonies flourished and became very prosperous.

Nilibar Colony, where I went, was the last to be developed and a good deal of work had already been done: My responsibilities were to supervise and promote the economic, social and cultural development of the villages and towns already settled. At the same time, there were large areas still lying barren. On of my duties was to chalk out irrigation channels and roads and plan villages and small towns so that these areas could also start humming with activity and achieve prosperity. A large number of senior irrigation and civil engineers and scores of revenue officials assisted me. Twice a year thousands of people would come by train from Eastern Punjab and would be allotted different villages by the revenue officials where the house plots and land for each family had been earmarked.

Reflecting on what several years later was to cause religious hatred and havoc in the Punjab, I saw no evidence in those years of any communal tension nor any communal disturbances throughout the vast area. This was not due to any lack of contacts. I travelled an average of twenty days a month in small towns and villages and never witnessed the open circulation of communal propaganda. The leaders of the communities, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, would meet me and my officers jointly and would openly discuss all questions of the economic development and the social and cultural welfare of all communities in an apparently cordial atmosphere. True, I heard occasionally that propaganda was being done in mosques, urging people to join the Muslim League and to support the demand for Pakistan. I could never imagine that these almost imperceptible straws in the wind would soon become a cyclone lashing the entire Punjab.

To reassure myself, one day I raised the question with Mian Allahyar Khan Daultana who belonged to one of the most distinguished families in Multan. He was the uncle of my friend, Mian Mumtaz Khan

Daultana, who later became one of the senior leaders of the Muslim League after the partition of the Punjab. I asked Allahyar Khan if he saw a big change taking place in inter-communal relations in these districts among people who had always lived so harmoniously. He pondered and said that there was no tension as such but a growing deterioration in the long cherished cultural values and social relations.

He illustrated this with a story doing the rounds of the villages. The narrator is a village headman. In his grandfather's days, he says, a Muslim zamindar (landlord) and a well-to-do Hindu trader lived in neighbouring houses and the families were closely attached to each other. In due course, when the wedding day of the Hindu merchant's daughter was approaching, the father was putting up difficulties about her dowry. Unable to put up with the daily rows between her parents on this account, the daughter went to the Muslim zamindar's family to cry on their shoulders. The Muslim zamindar then said to her: "My daughter, you come here and stay with us and I will have a talk with your father and mother. In any case, we will celebrate your wedding in this house as our own daughter and give you plenty of dowry so that you can go to your new home with dignity and happiness."

In his father's days, the headman says, in exactly similar circumstances, the Muslim zamindar and his wife said gently: "Dear daughter, we all sympathize with you. The matter has to be decided by your Hindu parents and you should not have come to a Muslim house. You go back to your parents and we will also speak to them."

Then came the present generation. When the girl, in similar circumstances, comes to the Muslim zamindar's family, he and his wife start scolding her: "You must realize that you are a Hindu girl and we are a Muslim family. You have no business to enter this house. You must go back to your Hindu parents and it is for them and you to settle the matter. You should not have come to us with your family complaints." When the girl has gone, the Muslim zamindar says to his wife: "My dear, the Hindu girl having come to our house, why did we let her go at all? She had fallen in our trap and we could have disposed her off with some Muslim young man."

On the whole, it appeared that in the early 1940s there was not much sympathy for the communal parties and even support for the Congress party was negligible in the Western Punjab. That there was no popular sentiment in favour of the Muslim League was illustrated by the fact that when Jinnah, president of the Muslim League, visited Lahore in April 1944, he was not given a popular welcome and Premier Khizar Hayat's position seemed quite strong in this Muslim-majority province.

1

Negotiations for India's Independence

Simla Conference of June 1945

Although within the Punjab goodwill, cooperation and harmony prevailed between the three main religious groups of the province, the Simla Conference in June 1945 brought into glaring light the change that was taking place at the national level. Jinnah, one-time ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity, now wanted to be the sole representative of the Muslims of India in a confrontation with the Congress. He strongly opposed any agreement except on his personal terms, even when the proposals conceded to the Muslims more than their due share of high offices. At the Simla Conference of the party leaders of India, the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, offered on behalf of the British Government to form the National Executive Council consisting exclusively of Indian members. Unlike the Cripps offer of 1942, the proposed Executive Council was to be in charge of all the portfolios of the national administration with the Viceroy promising to act in accordance with the advice of the Council. The Viceroy suggested at the same time that the Executive Council would gain in administrative experience in the coming year and be in a position to tackle the political issues in India after the war when final constitutional changes were to take place. In regard to the war effort, an announcement had already been made by L.S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, that it would be up to the Indian leaders, i.e., the new Executive Council, to take decisions freely according to their national perception.

The Simla Conference raised high hopes for a national Government, the only question for resolution being the communal representation in the Executive Council. During the meetings, Jinnah insisted that not only must the Muslims have parity with the Congress, but the Muslim League must also have the right to nominate all the Muslim members of the Council while the Congress could nominate the Hindu members. The aim was to treat the Congress party as a Hindu organization and to

claim for the Muslim League the role of sole spokesman of all the Muslims of India. This was totally unacceptable to the Congress party because of its entire record as a national and secular party. In the Congress, the Hindus, the Muslims, the Christians, the Sikhs and others all held the same place of honour without any religious distinction. The Congress leaders, therefore, insisted on their right to nominate for their quota in the Executive Council any member whether a Hindu, Muslim, Christian or of any other faith. Jinnah stuck to his position and would not allow any Muslim to be on the Executive Council except those of the Muslim League nominated by him. Jinnah's arbitrary attitude was all the more flagrant in a conference where the Congress was represented by its Muslim president, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was well known in the Arab world as a great scholar, and with the presence of Sir Khizar Hayat Khan the Muslim Premier of the Punjab, representing the majority of the Muslim population of this state. Dr. Khan Sahib also attended the Simla Conference as Premier of NWFP, another pro-Congress, Muslim-majority province. As we learnt later, Lord Wavell was keen to include Sir Khizar in the Executive Council, if necessary as an additional member nominated by him.

To pass objective judgement on the attitude of the main parties on the issue of mutual accommodation and national reconciliation, one had only to study the lists of the nominees suggested by each party. The Congress party's list included the Congress president, Maulana Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The two others were an Indian Christian and a Parsee.[1] Thus the Congress list had only two Hindus although the Hindus were the majority community in the country; the Congress list confirmed its national character. The Muslim League suggested five names all of which were members of the Muslim League. Among the four under consideration for nomination by Lord Wavell, one was a Muslim, Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, one representative of the Sikhs and two of the Scheduled Castes. The Muslim League should have appreciated that in the Council of fourteen members, there would have been seven Muslims, two Hindus and five members of the minority communities. Even taking into account only the Muslim nominees of the Muslim League, there would have been only two Hindus against the five League members in the Council. The Simla Conference was aborted because the Muslim League insisted upon its right to nominate all the Muslim members of the Council even when they were offered more than twice the number of Muslim members as

[1] Maulana Azad: *India Wins Freedom.*

compared to the Hindu members in the Council. Sir Khizar once mentioned, in a talk with me in 1946, that Jinnah's intransigence was mainly due to the strong and secret encouragement by Lord Wavell and other British leaders and officers.

This was the second occasion in India's struggle for independence when a great opportunity was demolished because the Congress and the Muslim League failed to work together at the highest political level to build mutual trust, goodwill and cooperation. This time it was the intransigence of the Muslim League which was to set the course for the future tragic mistrust and confrontations between the two parties. The first such occasion was the Congress's obduracy in not accommodating the Muslim League when forming the Government in the United Provinces after the 1937 elections. That rebuff to the League had a lasting effect and, in consequence, during the next eight years, the Muslim masses looked more and more to the Muslim League to safeguard and promote their interests. Ironically, in both cases decisions crucial to preserving India's unity and promoting her freedom were thwarted not by the British rulers but by the obstinacy and myopia of the Indian leaders themselves.

The 1945 Elections and the Muslim League's Call for Pakistan

My term as Colonization Officer was coming to an end and I wrote to the Chief Secretary, Lahore, requesting to be posted as Deputy Commissioner to the Ferozepur district. His reply was favourable. I had already spent a very pleasant year at Ferozepur as Assistant Commissioner and had a wide circle of friends in the district.

Travels in various parts of the district and meeting prominent leaders there during my last stay had left happy memories. The city, apart from its other attractions, had a military cantonment and a Military Club which provided active social life and special facilities. Lahore, the capital of the province, was about an hour's drive and a District Officer could easily escape once or twice a month for a few hours visit to Lahore to meet friends and officials and yet get back to District Headquarters before nightfall, for those days there was a strict regulation prohibiting a District Officer from being away from his district over the night without the Government's formal approval.

In early January 1946, I received a call from the Premier of the Punjab, Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, asking me to see him in Lahore. During the conversation, he expressed his wish that I should go as District Commissioner to Shahpur district which was his home district.

Though I did not show it, the news saddened me a bit. Shahpur district, with headquarters at Sargodha, was very far from Lahore. I hardly knew anyone there and the prospects did not much appeal to me. Normally, an officer is given orders to take up a new post and he is required to comply with the decision without demur. Sir Khizar said that he knew of my wish to go to Ferozepur but he would be greatly pleased if I could agree to go to Shahpur. Naturally, there was no question of saying 'No' to the Premier, and his courtesy won me over. Explaining further, he said he was seriously concerned with developments in that area. In that peaceful district, communal hatred was being propagated by some political elements and he was unhappy to learn that even some senior Muslim officers had been encouraging this tendency, a number of them having their sympathy with the Muslim League. He wished that all parties in Shahpur district as well as in the Punjab province would work for communal harmony and peaceful cooperation which had been the great tradition of our people. He felt that my taking over the district administration might stop the activities of the communalist elements.

Before I left, he sadly commented that he could not understand the propaganda in the name of the two-nation theory: "We are all inheritors of the millennium-old Indo-Islamic culture and we in the Punjab should have every reason to be proud of it. Ninety-five per cent of the Muslims all over India are converts from Hinduism and are not the descendants of any other race, Arabian, Turkish or Iranian." He could not accept that the Muslims in various parts of India and the Punjab had suddenly developed a new Islamic culture which was not part of the national heritage. Continuing, he said: "Take the case of our Tiwana family. You will find Tiwana Hindus in Rajasthan, Tiwana Sikhs in Patiala and other places and Tiwana Muslims in the West Punjab. According to legend, Tiwana tribes who were Hindus started migrating from Rajasthan northwards some centuries ago. Some of them settled in the northern Punjab—hence the Sikh Tiwana of Patiala State—and other districts in the East Punjab and then the others moved on to the West Punjab. According to legend, when the Tiwanas and other tribes accepted Islam at Pakpattan after crossing the river Sutlej, the Hindu sacred threads taken off by them weighed 64 pounds." After a few weeks of my talk with him, I proceeded to the headquarters of Shahpur district at Sargodha.

During the preceding months, when general elections were held all over India, the speeches of the leaders strongly reflected their party programmes. The Muslim League's sole theme was the partition of India and the attainment of a separate State of Pakistan composed of the

Muslim-majority provinces to safeguard the interests of the Muslims. In a united India with Hindu majority, the rights of the Muslims, it was alleged, would be crushed and their culture subverted. With this political platform of the League, the most vehement speeches had to be made by their leaders attributing treacherous designs to the Hindus and the Congress party and to incite hatred against them. While the top leaders used restrained language in their attacks, at lower party levels the League propaganda and the slogans in many cases lost no opportunity of wounding the religious feelings of other communities. Inter-communal hostility had, for the first time, been propagated in the cities and more so in the countryside. In the Punjab, where the Muslims were in a majority and occupied a dominant position politically, this propaganda rang hollow. With a little thoughtfulness, the Muslims could have won the goodwill of the minorities: This, in fact, had been happening.

Background to the Muslim League's Demand for Pakistan

In regard to the birth of the Muslim League and its impassioned speeches for Pakistan, one could, of course, recall the historical memories such as the renaissance of the Muslims under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and others, and the foundation of the Aligarh Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875. The Muslim League was formed, partly, to promote the interests of the Muslims, specially as these had been callously ignored in several respects in the past. The Muslims leaders at that time, while enlisting British support, assured them of the loyalty of the Indian Muslims. The Congress leaders had, over the years, always considered that Muslim League leaders wanted to be particularly loyal to the British Government and, in return, the latter were determined to support the League as a counterpoise to the Congress national movement. Equally well known was the attitude of the Conservative British leaders not to loosen their grip over their Indian Empire. For example, in 1942 President Roosevelt had strongly pleaded with Prime Minister Churchill to promise independence to India after the war and to grant self-government in the meanwhile. Churchill's reply was that this was a matter which concerned the British Empire, and he had "scorching rows" with President Roosevelt on this issue and rebuffed him.

Even earlier in September 1941, Churchill had made it clear that the Atlantic Charter promising self-determination to the occupied territories did not apply to the colonies, and that he would not be the first British Prime Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire.

When China's Chiang Kai-shek, in a letter to President Roosevelt, sought his support for assuring the Indian leaders of India's independence after the end of the war, Churchill's rejoinder was: "We do not agree with Chiang Kai-shek's estimate of the Indian situation. The Congress party in no way represents India and is strongly opposed by over 90 million Mohammedans, 40 million untouchables, and the Indian States comprising some 90 million people, to whom we are bound by treaty." The Muslims, the untouchables and the Indian princes were thus being encouraged to oppose the independence struggle and were being won over to the British side by granting special favours to them. As a consequence of these colonial designs pursued by the British Government and its representatives, India had to pay a colossal price when independence at last came.

In retrospect two other factors, one quite old and the other very recent, seemed to have contributed to the concept of Muslim separatism. First was the separate communal representation, which was created by the British Government in 1909 with the Morley-Minto Pact. This seriously and progressively promoted the communal outlook among the electorate. Some political parties, instead of putting forward programmes of social and economic progress of the masses, pandered to the religious feelings of the voters during the elections.

As a consequence of the separate communal representation, the appeal of the Muslim candidates in the elections was to seek support on religious grounds, promising to protect and promote the community's interests while stressing their determined opposition to the other communities. This had a damaging effect on the growth of national parties, national patriotism and secular ideals. It was widely believed that this was the British strategy, to create conflict between the communities in its pursuit of the policy of "Divide and Rule."

The second factor which we, as students of politics, did not fully appreciate at that time was the obstinate attitude of the Congress party in refusing to include some members of the Muslim League in the U.P. and Bombay Cabinets after the 1937 election although most people were easily taken in by the argument that the Congress party, having won a majority of the seats, must according to the constitutional principles form a Government of its own party. While it had been accepted in advance that the representatives of the minorities must be included in the Provincial Governments after the elections, the Congress party claimed that it had included Muslim Ministers of the Congress party in the U.P. Cabinet. The Muslim League had hoped that some of the Muslim League members of the Assembly would be included in the Congress Cabinet, but their approaches were rejected.

The Congress party demanded that a League member, before consideration for a Cabinet post, had to resign from the Muslim League and accept the discipline and the policies of the Congress high command. The inclusion of Muslim League members in the Cabinet would have caused few administrative problems because the election programmes of the Congress and the Muslim League were almost identical, and Jinnah himself had been minimizing the differences between the Congress and the Muslim League before the elections.[2]

A Coalition Government would have, perhaps, laid the foundations of better understanding and healthy cooperation between the Muslim League and the Congress to jointly serve the people. In the U.P., it would have been particularly desirable at this juncture because in that province there was a well-to-do and politically active Muslim middle class and elite which expected and deserved to share political power. It was not obsessed with the political solidarity and the united front of all the Muslims against the Congress on the subcontinent. This might have averted the future tragic developments if, for example, Muslim League leaders like Nawab Ismail Khan, Choudhari Khaliquzzaman and Liaquat Ali Khan, who held high social positions in the U.P. and enjoyed some prestige as national leaders, had been welcomed to join the Congress Government. This would have cost the Congress party little and would have probably won the goodwill and cooperation of these important leaders. The last named, Liaquat Ali Khan, was later to become the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The former two had even given written assurances to the effect that they would work in cooperation with the Congress and accept the Congress programme.[3]

Considering the strong national mandate the Congress had received in these elections, they could have afforded accommodation and generosity. The Congress had had big success in the six Hindu-majority provinces as well as in Assam, defeating most of the Muslim League candidates. In the Muslim-majority provinces, the Muslim League did not fare much better. In the North West Frontier Province, for example, it was the Congress and Muslim Red Shirt alliance which won a thumping majority. Similarly, in the Punjab it was the Unionist party which defeated almost all the Muslim League candidates and formed a Government as the majority party. In Bengal, the League's position was equally dismal. In this situation, when Muslim voters all over the country had generally rejected the Muslim League, it might have been a wise tactic to win over the few League leaders who had

[2]Penderel Moon: *Divide and Quit*, p. 16.
[3]Maulana Azad: *India Wins Freedom*.

some Muslim following to reassure the Muslims generally. Taking them as Ministers in the Congress Government without insisting upon their accepting the Congress membership and submitting to Congress discipline, would have led to their gradual merger with the Congress. How could they at that stage be expected to renounce the League membership when they had just been elected on the League ticket?

Quite understandably, the rebuff to the Muslim League in U.P. created great resentment among the Muslim League leaders, and Jinnah could, thereafter, proclaim to the Muslims all over India that the Congress was determined to break the Muslim League, and that under the Congress rule the rights of the Muslims would be trampled. This, he argued, showed how the Congress party would treat the Muslims when a Federal Government was formed. Obviously, the Congress leadership, being over-confident of representing the aspirations of the whole nation including the Muslims, sacrificed Congress-League entente in the name of constitutional sanctimony. This was to prove to be the beginning of the end of any Congress claim to represent the Muslims of India, and seemed to have sown the seeds of Pakistan. As a result of this disastrous mistake by the Congress, the Muslim leaders decided, thereafter, to wage an all-out war against the Congress party. Even in the Punjab where the Unionist party had defeated almost all the Muslim League candidates, the Premier Sir Sikander Hayat Khan with all the Muslim members of the Assembly joined the Muslim League, though they simultaneously retained their membership of the Unionist party.

In the next two years, the Muslim League levelled scathing charges against the Congress Ministries for the atrocities and injustices committed against the Muslims and gave wide publicity to these accusations. Nehru had suggested to Jinnah to agree to an impartial inquiry which the latter did not accept, and the League gave full vent to the hostile propaganda against the Congress and Hindu Raj. In this situation also, the presence of the Muslim League members in the U.P. Cabinet might have had a reassuring effect on the Muslim community, and these Ministers could have also visited neighbouring provinces to inquire into any case of injustice against Muslims.

When the war broke out in Europe in 1939, the Congress was not opposed to supporting the war effort; in fact, in the words of Nehru, the Congress had full sympathy with the struggle of democracy against fascism and wished to cooperate. But such cooperation, the Congress party insisted, "must be between equals by mutual consent for a cause which both considered worthy." As the Congress Ministers resigned after they had failed to get their expectations from the British

Government, Jinnah asked the Muslims all over India to observe December 22 as a "Day of Deliverance"—to celebrate the deliverance from the alleged Congress tyranny, oppression and injustices during the past two and a half years.

What, indeed, did the Congress actually achieve by quitting political power? While administering the eight provinces where they had been elected, these leaders were constantly in touch with the masses and could render useful service to them in the social, cultural and economic spheres and could also further strengthen the position of the party. The exercise of administrative responsibilities, if special attention had been paid to promoting the Muslims' interests and removing their grievances, would also have greatly helped in winning them over. The British Government and its officers in India could hardly have felt sorry at the turn of events and may have considered the Congress a good riddance.

We find interesting confirmation in September 1939 of the British design to build up the Muslim League as a counterpoise to the Congress, in spite of the adverse verdict of the 1937 elections. Jinnah, to his surprise, was one of the leaders to be consulted by the Viceroy on the day following the declaration of war. He later said: ". . . up to the time of the declaration of war the Viceroy never thought of me but of Gandhi and Gandhi alone. . . I wondered within myself why I was so suddenly promoted. . . "[4] From then onwards, the Viceroy and the British Government accorded to the Muslim League a decisive role in any negotiations for the political future of India. Soon Jinnah started exercising a veto in important negotiations which the Viceroys and the British Government encouraged him to do. As a result, they made it clear that no political settlement of India would be acceptable to them unless it were agreed to by the minorities—mainly implying the Muslim League.

In March 1940, the Muslim League passed the historic Lahore Resolution in which it formally announced its demand for Pakistan. The resolution stated that the areas in which Muslims were numerically in the majority should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign. Obviously, the idea was to carve out two Muslim-majority sovereign States in the North-West and East of India. Except that the resolution accorded a strong bargaining position to Jinnah and other League leaders, the objective at that time seemed entirely impracticable. Some even doubted if Jinnah himself seriously believed in this resolution. To

[4]C.H. Phillips and Mary Doreen Wainright: *The Partition of India*, p. 36.

hope to establish two independent Muslim States separated by a thousand miles of Indian territory and each having large non-Muslim population, while still leaving some 40 million Muslims in India, sounded utterly unrealistic. Eminent Muslim leaders like Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, the Premier of the Punjab, and Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, the Premier of Sindh rejected outright the idea of the partition of India. Khan Abdul Qaiyum, who was later to be a lieutenant of Jinnah, declared that the Frontier Province would resist partition of India "with its blood."[5] Syed Habibul Rahman, a leader of the Krishak Praja party, said the proposal was not only absurd, chimerical and visionary but

> will forever remain a castle in the air . . . . The Indians both Hindus and Muslims live in common Motherland, use the offshoots of a common language and literature and are proud of the noble heritage of a common Hindu and Muslim culture, developed through centuries of residence in a common land. There is no one among Hindus and Muslims who will be prepared to sacrifice all this in order to accept what is demanded by Mr. Jinnah.[6]

This resolution, however, provided a further opportunity for the British to oppose any political concessions to the national movement unless the Muslim League agreed. In August 1940, the British Conservative Government issued a declaration through its Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, making it clear that it could not be a party to any system of Government in which authority was directly denied to the minorities by large and powerful elements in India's national life. The relevant paragraph of Lord Linlithgow's public statement of August 8, 1940 read as follows:

> It goes without saying that they [His Majesty's Government] could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in the Indian national life nor could they be a party to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government.

This was a direct encouragement and assurance to Jinnah that no constitutional changes would be brought about in India without the consent of the Muslim League. Of course, the principle was unexcep-

[5] B.R. Nanda: *Nehru and the Partition of India*, p. 1.

[6] C.H. Phillips and Mary Doreen Wainright: *The Partition of India*.

tional that there should be a consensus among the majority and the minority parties, but the British aim was to strengthen Jinnah's hands and the intransigence of the Muslim League at a time when even few Muslims would have been convinced of the feasibility of carving two viable Muslim States out of India. Soon after the Viceroy's declaration, the Secretary of State, L.S. Amery, made the following statement in the House of Commons:

> The foremost among these elements stand the great Muslim community, ninety million strong and constituting a majority both in North-Western and North-Eastern India, but scattered as minority over the whole subcontinent. In religious and social outlook, in historic tradition and culture, the difference between them and their Hindu fellow countrymen goes as deep, if not deeper than any similar differences in Europe.

It was highly presumptuous and patently malicious of Amery to claim that he knew the Indo-Islamic culture and the feelings of the Indian Muslims better than the great Muslim leaders mentioned earlier who had opposed the Muslim League Resolution of March 1940. The Congress party rejected the August declaration, and later it started the individual "civil disobedience" movement in October 1940 with several thousands of Congress members courting arrest every month during the next year.

Eighteen months later, after Pearl Harbour, the fall of Rangoon, and the advance of the Japanese to India's very gates, the Churchill Government frantically sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India.

The Cripps mission did not hold out any definite promise of independence to India after the war beyond the offer of an elected body to make a Dominion Constitution for India. An additional proviso, which almost conceded the demand for Pakistan, was that if any province or a princely State did not want to join the Indian Union, it could become an independent Dominion and frame its own constitution — a clear encouragement to the provinces and the princely States to Balkanize India. The services of Sir Stafford were enlisted as he was known to be a friend of India, but was given no authority to work out an acceptable solution with the Indian leaders. The powers of the Council Members of the proposed Interim Government in the Cripps offer were also limited, with the Viceroy retaining overriding authority. The British Government did not seem serious in carrying on these negotiations, and Sir Stafford was abruptly recalled to London on April 12. There was a general opinion that Churchill had sent Cripps to India

as a result of pressure from America and China, and had no intention whatsoever to promise independence to India after the war.

One inescapable conclusion of Lord Linlithgow's Declaration of August 1940 and the Cripps proposals of March 1942 was that the British Conservative Government wanted to actively promote the malevolent objective of the partition of India and had, thus, lent support to Jinnah's demand and now even encouraged the princely States to aspire to become independent sovereign States. The sympathies and the support of the Churchill Government were always with the Muslim League because, unlike the Congress party, they were not carrying on relentless struggle for national independence by resorting to non-cooperation, by going to jail and by opposing the war effort unless India was promised independence.

Soon after the Cripps visit, the All-India Congress Committee passed the resolution on August 18, 1942 calling upon the nation to launch civil disobedience. The colonial Government of India declared the Congress an unlawful body, and all the Congress Working Committee members were arrested followed by the imprisonment of Congress leaders all over the country who were enthusiastically responding to the call of "civil disobedience." With the leaders in jail, there were widespread violence and riots challenging the law and order machinery, forcing the Government in many cases to call in the army. As the Congress leaders were in jail for the next three years, the field was clear for the Muslim League leaders to spread the League's influence all over the country. They worked energetically, organizing the Muslim masses, and won their general support as the League laid maximum emphasis on its commitment to safeguard Muslim interests in all respects—economic, political, educational and cultural—against the alleged Hindu domination.

The British Viceroy and the Governors colluded with the League and brought about the installation of Muslim League Premiers in Sindh, Assam, Bengal and North-West Frontier Province which had previously pro-Congress Governments and were opposed to the Muslim League. In the Punjab, the position of the Premier Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, with his strong support of the Unionist party, could not be challenged in spite of all sorts of pressures by the central League leaders. Throughout the country, however, this was the period when the Muslim League considerably increased its influence among the masses by active propaganda and through its control of the four Muslim-majority provinces.

Before this period and even with the vigorous resumption of the Congress party activities after it, I continued to entertain serious

misgivings. I felt that the Congress party, while concentrating on its implacable struggle against the British, did not do enough heart-searching to understand the reasons for the Muslim League's antagonism to the Congress or to allay the anxieties of the Muslim masses which were being fanned by the Muslim League. Nor did they seriously seek a conciliation with Jinnah, and work out an accommodation with the Muslim League in the larger interest of national unity. The lack of more serious efforts by the Congress party in this direction could, perhaps, be attributed to the leaders being so mesmerized by the intense sincerity of their cause, by their commitment to secularism and equal respect for all communities as well as by their suffering and sacrifices for national independence.

Labour Government's Categorical Policy Towards India's Independence

The British Labour Party, which came to power immediately after World War II, seemed earnest in granting independence to India, an objective with which its leaders had sympathized for many years. They were all the more anxious to transfer power peacefully to Indian leaders in order to avoid a general uprising against the British rule. The strong emotions aroused by the trial of the officers of the Indian National Army (who had fought against the British in Malaysia, Singapore and Burma) and the disturbances following it had been an additional impulsion for the Labour Government to take urgent steps to negotiate with the Indian leaders and to resolve the deadlock between the Congress and the Muslim League. The speech of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the new Secretary of State, in the House of Lords on December 4, 1945, was quite specific and reassuring as a general principle. He explained that the setting up of a Constitution-making body after the forthcoming general elections in India was a matter of urgency. He also affirmed the general desire of the British people to grant independence to India at an early date so that she could occupy her rightful place as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth. Following up Lord Pethick-Lawrence's statement, an all-party parliamentary delegation arrived in New Delhi in the first week of January 1946 to discuss with the Indian leaders the form of constitutional set-up acceptable to them with the transfer of power to India.

Meanwhile, the results of the general elections for the Central and Provincial Assemblies were dramatic, and conveyed the emerging trend of the strength of the main parties. O' the 102 elected seats of the

Central Assembly, the Congress won 57 seats, the Muslim League 30, independents 5 and the Akali Sikhs 2. Compared to the previous Assembly, the Congress had increased its strength by 21 seats and the Muslim League by 5 seats. To understand the relative electoral mandate which the two major parties received from the people, it had to be noted that "the Congress got 91.3 per cent of the votes cast in the non-Muslim constituencies and the Muslim League won every Muslim seat and secured 86.6 per cent of the total votes cast in the Muslim constituencies." In the provincial elections, the Congress secured majority in all the six Hindu-majority provinces, and in two of those provinces which the League demanded as part of its proposed Pakistan, Assam and North-West Frontier Province.

In the Punjab, which was expected to be the heartland of West Pakistan, the Muslim League won 79 of the 86 Muslim seats, but could not form a Government because the Unionist Muslims, along with the Congress, the Akali Sikhs and the independents commanded a majority in the Assembly. Only in Bengal and Sindh, where it had won majority seats, was the Muslim League able to form Governments with the support of the Europeans and the independents. It was, however, clear that the League could by now legitimately claim to represent the Muslim masses in the country, having won 446 of the total 495 provincial Muslim seats.

The ten-member British parliamentary delegation during its four-week stay in January 1946 held discussions with the leaders of all the political parties and travelled to different cities in the country. The visit to the Punjab aroused considerable interest, though we had to recognize that the discussions with the Punjab leaders would have only limited impact on the delegation's study of the all-India issues. Thy arrived in Lahore on January 12 and met Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, the Premier, deputations of Muslim League leaders, and those of Muslim Unionists, Congress and Akali leaders. As it was reported in the press, the Punjab Premier was quite outspoken in his criticism of proposals suggesting the partition of India on communal basis, which he warned would destroy the peace and prosperity of the country.

The opposition to the partition of the Punjab was even stronger among the Hindus and the Sikhs. The leaders of both these communities condemned such a proposal and described it as being tantamount to destroying the integrity and historical unity of this land.

Unlike the Cripps mission sent by the Churchill Government, the parliamentary delegation, representing the new Labour Government was anxious to explore a political arrangement which preserved India's unity rather than making overt suggestions about its partition. Jinnah,

as expected, stressed the demand for a separate State of Pakistan to protect the interests of the Muslims, and he had certainly enhanced his personal authority to do so after the results of the recent general elections. The result of the parliamentary delegation's study of the Indian situation was a unanimous and strong recommendation for early national independence.

It was soon after the departure of the parliamentary delegation that one read the news about the mutiny of the Indian sailors on the Indian Navy ships in Bombay and Karachi. The grounds for revolt were low pay and racial discrimination and the mutineers shouted slogans of national independence and opposition to the British presence. They took up arms against the troops sent to quell the mutiny. It was only in response to the appeals of the Indian leaders and on assurances by them that the sailors agreed to surrender. Here was another portentous signal to the British Government to hasten the process of transfer of power in India.

The Cabinet Mission's Visit

On February 19, 1946, the British Government announced that a mission of three Cabinet Ministers, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and A.V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, would visit India to seek agreement of the Indian leaders on constitutional "principles and procedures" for India's independence. As Prime Minister Attlee put it, the aim of the mission was to help India attain full freedom as quickly as possible. His views on the most controversial question about the anxieties of the minorities, implying the Muslims and their demands, were constructive and considerate. He said: "We are mindful of the rights of the minorities, and the minorities should be able to live free from fear. On the other hand, we cannot allow a minority to place their veto on the advance of the majority."

The Cabinet Mission arrived on March 24 and met the leaders of all political parties. From the Punjab the top leaders of the Muslim, Congress and the Sikh parties went to meet them. Again, there were reports that Sir Khizar Hayat Khan had heated arguments with Cripps on the question of the partition of the country. He was reported to have taunted Cripps that the British were the father and the mother of Pakistan and he was left in no doubt about this at the time of the last Simla Conference.

The Punjab non-Muslims presented a memorandum to the Cabinet Mission again opposing the inclusion of the Punjab in Pakistan. They

said that there was no theory of self-determination based on the population figures, economic and agricultural statistics and cultural and linguistic heritage that could support it. The memorandum was based on irrefutable facts and figures, and questioned which true Punjabi could insist upon the Punjab becoming the nucleus of North-West Pakistan.

I found it difficult to persuade myself that the population composition of the Punjab could entitle this province to be the heart of Pakistan nor could it justify the partition of the province between the Muslims and the non-Muslims. The table below shows that of the total population of 28 million, 57 per cent were Muslims and 43 per cent Hindus and Sikhs. Even in the Lahore Division itself, the ratio was four million Muslims and three million non-Muslims:

		Population in millions	
	Commissioners Division	*Muslims*	*Non-Muslims*
1.	Rawalpindi }	9	2
2.	Multan }		
3.	Lahore	4	3
4.	Jullunder }		
5.	Ambala }	3	7
		16	12
		28	

I shared the hope of my colleague, Penderel Moon, who was then Secretary to the Governor, that "the Punjab, where three communities (Muslim, Hindu and Sikh) were closely intermingled, spoke a common language, shared a common provincial pride and to some extent a common culture would remain a unity. . ." Sir Khizar never minced his words when arguing on this subject. For example, in London, where he had gone to attend the Victory celebrations in mid-1946, he said in an interview with Reuters: "The average man in Britain is far more interested in the horse likely to win the race than he is in what may happen to India in this critical stage in her history."

The Muslim League's propaganda and election results failed to shake my faith even in mid-1946 about the emergence of India as a united country after independence. How could, one argued to oneself, Pakistan be realized when the general population of the Punjab and NWFP was opposed to it? Nor did I see in Shahpur district, which was

in the heart of the West Punjab, any public demonstrations or enthusiasm for the Muslim League. There was, of course, a good deal of activity, but it was all very discreet and unobtrusive. Otherwise, all the communities were living peacefully in big cities, in small towns and even in the remote villages.

To me this used to be particularly illustrated during my drive from Sargodha to Sakesar, a small hill station at the remote North-Western corner of the district where the Deputy Commissioners usually spent a couple of months every summer. In the prevailing circumstances, there was no question of my going for weeks to this hill station, but I visited on three or four weekends. The last 30 miles stretch of the road to Sakesar runs on a plateau with small villages on each side. These were Muslim villages, with two or three Hindu families, mainly traders, who lived with full confidence and without any sense of fear. I had never read any complaint during the past year of any ill-will or assaults against Hindu families. This was in 1946 when fires of hatred were already smouldering in many parts of India and the Punjab.

The Cabinet Mission Plan

The main discussions of the Cabinet Mission were with the Congress leaders and Jinnah at New Delhi and Simla. These long and exhaustive exchanges aimed at exploring possible common ground for the future constitution of India and the formation of an Interim Government. Jinnah pressed for a Pakistan consisting of six Muslim-majority provinces. The Mission would not concede this because some of those provinces had large districts with Hindu majority. The British made it clear that if Jinnah insisted on a separate sovereign State of Pakistan, then East Punjab, West Bengal (including Calcutta) and Assam would have to be excluded. In the alternative the Pakistan of six provinces envisaged by Jinnah would be formed as a part of the Indian Union though with maximum autonomy short of sovereignty. Jinnah seemed inclined to accept the latter. Meanwhile, the Congress, which had so far been firmly committed to the unity of India, was now veering round to the idea of a weaker Central Government conceding greater autonomy to the Muslim provinces.

The differences on details and about the constitution of the Interim Government, however, appeared insurmountable. After a last attempt between May 5 and 12 to resolve controversial issues in consultation with the representatives of each party, the Mission finally announced its own proposals on May 16. While taking into account the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture and political and social life

might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must play a dominant role, the Mission at the same time rejected the idea of the partition of India into two separate sovereign States, asserting that "every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan can equally, in our view, be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from Pakistan." It was also convinced that "any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do would be contrary to the wishes of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces. . ." Apart from the communal arguments, there were weighty administrative, economic, military and geographical obstacles to partition. In its plan the Mission suggested:

1. An All-India Union Government and Legislature dealing with foreign affairs, defence and communications and having correspondingly necessary financial powers.
2. All remaining powers to be exercised by the provinces which were grouped into three sections—Section A consisting of six Hindu-majority provinces; Section B consisting of the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and Sindh; and Section C consisting of Bengal and Assam.
3. The representatives of the provinces were to frame the constitution of each province and, if they so agreed, to draw up the constitution for their group.
4. Finally, the representatives of all the provinces and those of the Indian states were to meet to frame the constitution of the Union of India.

An additional clause in the plan, which could create some difficulty and doubts about the finality of the group arrangements, read as follows:

> As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any province to elect to come out of any group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the new legislature of the province after the first general election under the New Constitution.

Essentially, the plan laid down that, after independence, India would have a three-tier governmental structure consisting of:

a. The Government of the Indian Union with its Legislature and Cabinet Ministers with powers restricted to Defence, External Affairs and Communications.

b. The group Government (if the representatives of each Section decided to do so) with its Legislature and executive; and
c. The Government and Legislature in each province of the three Sections.

The Cabinet Mission's negotiations with the Indian leaders and its announcement of its plan on May 16 clearly brought to focus two points of the British Labour Government's policy towards India: (a) They were keen to grant independence to India at the earliest date in accordance with the constitutional arrangements acceptable to the Indian leaders. (b) The May 16 plan, while rejecting the partition of India, was an earnest effort to arrive at the best possible compromise between the Congress ideal of a strong and united India and the League's insistence upon the division of India into two sovereign States.

While announcing the May 16 plan, the Cabinet Mission made an appeal to the Indian nation in which it said that the plan

> we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest possible time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties, but you will recognize with us that at this supreme moment in Indian history statesmanship demands mutual accommodation—the alternative would be a grave danger of violence, chaos and even civil war—we appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community, or interest, to the interests of the whole four hundred million of the Indian People.

Jinnah expressed his disappointment that the plan did not concede the League's demand for a sovereign State of Pakistan but carefully avoided rejecting the plan. He must have had at heart good reasons to be satisfied that, instead of the "moth eaten" Pakistan, the Muslims would, under the plan, exercise an autonomous role in Section B and C states (the Muslim-majority provinces) without interference from any Hindu-dominated Union Government. Besides, Jinnah's assumption of the Viceroy's acceptance of the principle of parity between the Congress and the League in the Union Government strengthened the League's position on all national issues. He may even have visualized secession by the groups of Muslim-majority provinces to form a sovereign State of Pakistan in course of time, although the Cabinet Plan, unlike the Cripps offer of 1942, did not concede to provinces the right to secede from the Indian Union.

Whatever his initial fears and hopes, Jinnah persuaded the Muslim League to pass a resolution on June 6 accepting the plan and joining the National Constituent Assembly. The resolution promised the League's willingness to give the plan a trial and to cooperate for its implementation notwithstanding the hope expressed in the resolution itself that its acceptance would ultimately result in the establishment of a completely sovereign Pakistan, which was the objective of the Muslims of India.

The Congress Committee, too, had its reservations, the first being against the grouping of the provinces into the three Sections. In its resolution of May 24, it put forward its own interpretation that as a first step each province would have the choice to decide whether or not it wanted to join the group in which it was placed. Apparently, the aim of the Congress party was to provide an opportunity to the North-West Frontier Province and Assam to opt out of Sections B and C respectively, which they would certainly have done if the choice had been left to them. This interpretation or rather suggestion was, however, a serious departure from the definite provisions in the plan, and led to the reaffirmation by the Cabinet Mission that the grouping of provinces in the Sections specified for them was mandatory. The Congress leaders were also critical of the restrictions imposed on the powers and functions of the Constituent Assembly, but were reassured by the Mission that, subject to the procedure prescribed in their statement, the Constituent Assembly would freely exercise its right to implement the plan without any interference from the British Government. Among themselves, the Congress leaders continued to express serious differences and doubts over the May 16 plan.

Watching from the Punjab, the negative reaction of the minorities was outspoken. Sir Khizar Hayat Khan also expressed his strong feelings and, according to press reports, had heated arguments with Cripps against the possible partition of the country.

Dr. Ambedkar and the Scheduled Castes Federation rejected the plan outright and so did the Sikhs in the Punjab. The latter were loud in their condemnation because, according to their leaders, the grouping left them at the mercy of the Muslim majority in Group B and with a weak centre with no power to redress their grievances. At the Sikh conference at Amritsar on June 10, Master Tara Singh proclaimed the determination of the Sikhs to fight the plan of the Cabinet Mission.

The Congress still had not given its final decision on the May 16 plan. While hoping for its favourable decision on the long-term plan, the Viceroy with the approval of the Mission had started negotiations with the parties for the short-term plan to form an Interim Government

so that the day-to-day administration of the country could be entrusted to the true representatives of the Indian political parties. Here again, the irreconcilable attitudes of the two parties subverted any agreement. Jinnah, true to his style, insisted on parity between the Congress and the Muslim League in the Executive Council and on his exclusive right to nominate every Muslim member. That is to say, he would not agree to any non-League Muslim being included in the Council. The Congress found both these demands totally arbitrary and unacceptable. Various other formulations on the composition of the Executive Council put forward by the Mission were turned down by the two parties. In the end, the Mission announced on June 16 a fourteen-member Executive Council composed of: six of the Congress party including one Scheduled Caste representative, five from the Muslim League, one Sikh, one Indian Christian and one Parsee. It was clarified that the proposed communal ratio in the formula was with a view to installing an Executive Council of Indian leaders immediately and that this would not form a precedent or a principle. Without realizing the possible consequences, and in the hope of putting pressure on the Congress for its early decision on the long-term constitutional arrangements, the Mission stated in paragraph No. 8 of its announcement:

> In the event of the two parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of May 16th.

There were frequent reports of differences among the top Congress leaders on the May 16 plan. Maulana Azad was reported to be favourable and so were Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel with some reservations. Immediately after its announcement, Mahatma Gandhi had praised it in his prayer meeting on May 17. The next week again, in the *Harijan*, he called it the "best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances." The Cabinet members, he declared, "have managed to devise the easiest and the quickest method of ending the British rule." Later reports, however, indicated Mahatma Gandhi's strong opposition to the formula of Interim Government and even to the constitutional scheme.

The final decision of the Congress Working Committee was embodied in its resolution of June 25 rejecting the Interim Government proposal on the ground that the party "can never give up the national character of the Congress or accept an unnatural and unjust parity, or

agree to the veto of a communal group." The May 16 plan it accepted, but subject to its own interpretation of some of its provisions. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, president of the party, in his letter to the Viceroy stated:

> We have pointed out what in our opinion were the defects of the proposals. We also gave our interpretation of some of the provisions of the statement. While adhering to our views, we accept your proposals and are prepared to work them with a view to achieve our objective.

Despite the reservations by either party, it was obvious that for the first time in many years, the Congress and the Muslim League had agreed to sit down together and work out a constitutional system based on their acceptance of some general principles. I had entertained the hope that if the leaders of the two parties started frank and genuine negotiations with "their extended vision" even while remaining mindful of the interests of their communities and their parties, they would, in a spirit of give and take, herald the freedom of India preserving its unity and assuring the freedom, equality and dignity of each community. No longer could anyone accuse the British of determining or dictating the fate of India—it was in the hands of the Congress and the Muslim League leaders who were by any standard men of stature.

Even before the Mission's departure on June 29, Jinnah had made strong public statements expressing his resentment at its bad faith in not forming the Interim Government as solemnly promised in its announcement of June 16. Since the Congress had rejected the plan of Interim Government, Jinnah rightly claimed that, in accordance with the specific wording of paragraph 8 of the statement of June 16, the Muslim League and other willing minority groups should have been immediately invited to form the Executive Council. Why had that not been done? Had there been collusion between the Congress and the Mission or was it to placate the former's feelings that the Mission had gone back on its word of honour and given up the decision to form the Interim Government? If indeed, the motive was not to hurt the Congress's feelings with a view to ensure its fuller support for the constitutional plan, the British Government was in for a shock. Within a week of the Mission's departure, a serious blow to the Cabinet Plan was struck at the All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay.

Moving a resolution supporting the plan, Maulana Azad explained, in reply to some critical speeches, how the plan was a real victory for

the Congress and promised India's independence without violence and bloodshed. He said:

> The British acceptance of India's national demand as a result of nonviolent agitation and negotiations was unprecedented in world history. A nation of forty crores was becoming independent through discussion and settlement and not as a result of military action. From this point of view alone, it would be sheer lunacy to underestimate our victory.[7]

Azad also pointed out that the Cabinet Mission had accepted all essential elements of the Congress point of view.

The Maulana's resolution was passed by a preponderant majority, but it contained reservations and interpretations that questioned some of the basic provisions of the plan. At the final session, Nehru, who had succeeded Azad as the Congress President, in defending the Congress acceptance of the resolution against the attacks of the Congress Socialists, further elaborated quite forcefully the fundamental reservations made and the exceptions taken by the Congress party to some of the stipulations of the plan. In his speech and at a press conference three days later, Nehru declared that the Congress was not bound by the Mission's plan except to participate in the Constituent Assembly. Since the Constituent Assembly would be a sovereign body, it would not be bound by any limitations included in the plan and would be free to take all decisions. Nehru also expressed the view that the provinces of Assam and the North-West Frontier would probably not join the grouping scheme—something which the Mission had reaffirmed was mandatory and to which Jinnah had attached the greatest importance. In reply to a question at the press conference whether the Cabinet Mission's plan could be modified, Nehru reasserted that the Congress would be free to change its provisions in the Constituent Assembly as it thought fit.

Strongly reacting to Nehru's statement, Jinnah termed it as "a complete repudiation of the basic form on which the long-term scheme rests and all its fundamentals and terms and obligations." In similar vein, Lord Pethick-Lawrence said in Parliament on July 18, that the parties having agreed to the statement of May 16, could not go outside its terms in the Constituent Assembly.

There were ample comments those days to explain that Nehru's outspoken statements at the All-India Congress Committee, and at the press conference, were in reply to the strong criticism of the Congress

[7]Maulana Azad: *India Wins Freedom.*

Socialists and to clarify the position to the British Government that no outside interference in the functioning of the Sovereign Constituent Assembly would be accepted. It was also pointed out frequently that Nehru remained committed to the Cabinet Mission plan, but the serious reservations to the plan by the All-India Congress Committee and Nehru's press conference could not but provoke serious rethinking on the part of Jinnah and the Muslim League.

Pre-partition Situation in India

In spite of all the bitter religious propaganda during the elections, the relations between the communities were quite normal and happy. On arrival in Sargodha, I had been struck by the unreality of the Muslim League slogans against the Hindu domination. Some public men, however, expressed their latent fear that the virulent election campaign must have generated some communal hostility entailing a long-term threat to communal peace in the province. Sir Khizar Hayat Khan representing the Muslim Unionists' secular policies expressed grave concern about the policies and the speeches of the Muslim League. He pointed out that their policies would lead to religious antagonism and chaos in the Punjab and India. Any communal Ministry in the Punjab, he felt certain, would lead to clashes all over the province which would destroy the present happy relations between all the communities and deal a blow to the economic prosperity of this land.

The results of the elections demonstrated how successful had been the Muslim League's intensive propaganda in the towns and among the village leaders. Although Sir Khizar Hayat Khan was elected from three constituencies defeating his Muslim League rivals, the popular vote lead definitely shifted in favour of the Muslim League, which won a majority of the Muslim seats. More ominously a number of moderate Muslim leaders, who had been staunch Unionists three years earlier, were now joining the Muslim League, expecting that Pakistan in one form or another was within the realm of possibility. The position of the various parties after the elections was: Congress 51, Muslim League 74, Unionists 21, Panthic Party (Akali Dal) 21, Europeans and Anglo-Indians 2, Independent Scheduled Castes 2, Independent Indian Christian 1, and Independent Labour 2.

The British Governor of the Punjab invited Sir Khizar to form a Government as he had the support of the majority of the members of the newly elected Assembly. Sir Khizar was able to form a Coalition Government with the support of 100 Assembly Members including the Unionists, the Congress, the Panthic party and some Independents,

thus saving the Punjab from the Governor's authoritarian rule under Section 93. To assure the Muslims, who were constantly being fed on the Muslim League propaganda that only a League Ministry could protect the interests of the Muslim community, Sir Khizar, in his first speech, pledged to fully safeguard the interests of the Muslims and all other communities. A non-communal Ministry, he maintained, was the best hope for the Punjab's peace and economic progress.

The spectacular success of the Muslim League in the election notwithstanding, the campaign for Pakistan and the propaganda inciting communal differences still seemed unreal. Most of us in the Western Punjab could hardly envisage the need or the wisdom of partitioning the country and this province. In any case, the Punjab was a Muslim-majority province in which the Muslims played a worthy role and, in fact, dominated the political scene.

There was every reason to hope that the constitution of the new Government by Sir Khizar, representing all the communities and with solid support of the majority of the Assembly members, would ensure stability and good administration. But the Muslim League leaders were most unhappy. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary of the Muslim League, gave a warning that "grave consequences would follow the attempt to inflict on the Punjab Muslims a non-Muslim Ministry against their declared will." He warned that they would continue the struggle for Pakistan. At the same time, Jinnah said: "I am happy that we have already won the battle of Pakistan in the province of Punjab by carrying away 90 per cent of the Muslim seats." He further said that "the formation of the Ministry as I have repeatedly said, is a secondary question."

From these speeches of the top leaders, it was becoming obvious that in the coming months the Government would face rough weather in the Provincial Assembly. To go by Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan's statement, Muslims alone had the right to form a Government in the State Assembly on the basis that they were a majority in the province's population. This religious approach to the formation of a Government in a province, which was nearly 40 per cent non-Muslim, would have been in total disregard of the political rights and responsibilities of the minorities.

Despite the Muslim League's proclaimed determination to defeat the Unionist Ministry in the Assembly, it failed in this endeavour. Sir Khizar, true statesman that he was, again extended an invitation to the Nawab of Mamdot, the leader of the Muslim League, on March 8 suggesting that if the League joined the Coalition Government, he would personally be prepared to stand aside and seek no office. His

proposal being that: "Discard me if necessary but do have a Ministry representing all the communities." There was no response from the Nawab of Mamdot.

The Muslim League's threat to defeat the Coalition Ministry however proved vain when D.B. Singha, a Christian member of the Assembly supported by the Coalition Government won hands down the Speakership of the House on March 21 against the Muslim League's rival candidate. When the Budget was presented on March 22, the League members absented themselves.

In the middle of 1946, my preoccupation remained the day-to-day problems of the district administration and constant anxiety about the communal violence in some districts of the Punjab. In the provincial papers, one read some reports of the religious riots in other parts of India also but with a district administrator's limited horizons, these events seemed remote and less portentous.

The Muslim League's Decision to Launch "Direct Action" and the "Great Calcutta Killings"

Then in the middle of August came the blood-curdling news from Calcutta of the "Great Killings." Though something of the background of this demoniacal episode was well known, there was little pre-cognition of a wilfully encouraged catastrophe of such dimensions. Fulminating against the Congress party's reservations about the Cabinet Mission plan, Jinnah had announced that the Muslim League would have to reconsider its previous decision. At a meeting of the Council of the Muslim League, convened for this purpose in Bombay on July 27, Jinnah in his opening speech reiterated his demand for Pakistan. Under his advice the council finally repudiated the Cabinet Mission plan and resolved to prepare a programme of "Direct Action" to achieve Pakistan by fighting for it. The council also called upon all League members to renounce any titles received by them from the British Government. At the end of the meeting, Jinnah said:

> What we have done today is the most historic act in our history. Never have we in the whole history of the Muslim League done anything except by constitutional methods and by constitutionalism. But now we are obliged and forced into this position. This day we say good-bye to constitutional methods.

The League's rejection of the Cabinet plan and the call for "Direct Action" caused serious concern in the Congress circles. The Working Committee therefore decided to give it definite assurances and to allay

its anxieties about the Congress party's earnest commitment to the plan. A resolution passed at the Working Committee's meeting on August 8 said:

> The Committee have noted that criticisms have been advanced on behalf of the Muslim League to the effect that the Congress acceptance of the proposals contained in the Statement of May 16th was conditional. The Committee wish to make it clear that while they did not approve of all the proposals contained in this Statement, they accepted the scheme in its entirety. They interpreted it so as to resolve the inconsistencies contained in it and fill the omissions in accordance with the principles laid down in that Statement . . .
>
> They hold that provincial autonomy is a basic provision and each province has the right to decide whether to join a group or not. Questions of interpretation will be decided by the procedure laid down in the Statement itself, and the Congress will advise its representatives in the Constituent Assembly to function accordingly. . .
>
> The Committee have emphasized the sovereign character of the Constituent Assembly, that is its right to function and draw up a constitution for India without the interference of any external power or authority. But the Assembly will naturally function within the internal limitations which are inherent in its task, and will, therefore, seek the largest measure of cooperation in drawing up a constitution of free India allowing the greatest measure of freedom and protection for all just claims and interests. . .
>
> It was with this object and with the desire to function in the Constituent Assembly and make it a success, that the Working Committee passed their resolution on June 26, 1946 which was subsequently ratified by the All-India Congress Committee on July 7, 1946. By that decision of the A.I.C.C. they must stand, and they propose to proceed accordingly with their work in the Constituent Assembly.

In spite of this commitment by the Congress party, Jinnah's distrust of Congress manoeuvrings remained. The Congress still continued to hold that each province had the option whether or not to join a group, and reaffirmed its adherence to the decision of the All-India Congress Committee on July 7 which contained, from Jinnah's point of view, some serious reservations.

The League had called for the observance of "Direct Action" day on August 16 when meetings and demonstrations were held in various

parts of India without any serious disturbances. But in Calcutta it commenced a horrifying orgy of murders, loot and arson, which was to have its reverberations in other parts of the country striking at the very roots of Hindu-Muslim goodwill and amity.

Suhrawardy, the Muslim League Premier of Bengal who was openly bellicose, believed that to achieve Pakistan even violence and bloodshed were not to be ruled out. With a view to instigate much larger mass demonstrations, he declared August 16 as a general holiday. That day the police were conspicuous by their absence, and no precautionary measures were taken to maintain law and order.

The daily reports from Calcutta indicated that thousands of innocent persons were being butchered and a large number of business houses, shopping centres and private buildings destroyed. Three days of rioting left several thousand killed and nearly twenty thousand seriously injured in Calcutta. Whole streets were strewn with corpses of "men, women and children of all communities." The Suhrawardy Government, which had encouraged the demonstrations and provoked the holocaust, now proved helpless in controlling the situation, even though it was the Muslim community which was suffering the most. The British Governor equally failed to take prompt and firm action in calling the Army, which could have controlled the situation at a much lesser loss of human lives and destruction.

The Calcutta carnage provoked retaliation against Hindus in East Bengal. Daily communiques from Noakhali reported looting, arson and murders on a large scale, and abduction of women and forcible conversions. These outbursts of brutality in Bengal were the direct result of the political hatred and civil strife constantly incited by the Muslim League for years to achieve Pakistan. At that juncture, the responsibility lay squarely with the Provincial Government.

Mahatma Gandhi's Peace Mission in Noakhali in East Bengal and Bihar

Tormented by the agony of the people of Noakhali, Mahatma Gandhi went there with a few volunteers to visit the villages and to appeal for peace and goodwill among the Hindus and Muslims. His peace mission was to instil bravery in the hearts of the Hindu minority and repentance and compassion in the hearts of the Muslims. Gandhi visited the poor in their huts and he went around refugee camps giving solace to the sufferers. His mission was "to wipe every tear from every eye." He went over rickety bridges and swampy paths walking from village to village in the atmosphere surcharged with hatred and anguish. He said

he had come to Bengal solely with the object of establishing unity between the two communities who had become estranged from one another. During his travels, he would visit the Muslim areas where the people would greet him with respect and sometimes he stayed in the Muslim houses. He walked long hours every day to establish brotherly feelings between the two communities. The Mahatma's visits and appeals brought about a change in the surcharged atmosphere.

True to his personal conviction of fearlessness and non-violence, Gandhi continued to advise the Hindu refugees to develop personal courage and not to run away from the danger "for the fear of losing one's life." He entreated them to go back to their villages and face the danger fortified by goodwill and friendly feelings even towards those who were hostile. It seemed so utterly impracticable for the frightened refugees who had run away from butcheries, looting and abduction of women. But I had seen this advice from Mahatma Gandhi later during one of his visits in the Punjab when he was passing through Lahore. Lahore was then burning and there were wholesale murders most of the time but his advice to the frightened Hindus was "if Lahore is dying, die with it." He wanted them not to run away to seek refuge somewhere else but to face death bravely.

Almost simultaneously the conflagration spread to the province of Bihar where the Muslim minority found itself at the mercy of the Hindu fanatics. Nehru accompanied by his colleagues including Abdur Rab Nishtar visited Bihar, and they were shocked at the acts of barbarism that they saw everywhere. Having heard that the atrocities committed in Bihar by the Hindus were even worse than what had happened in Noakhali, Mahatma Gandhi proceeded to Bihar to work for peace and goodwill between the Hindus and Muslims. He saw for himself the brutalities committed by the Hindus of Bihar against their brethren and was horrified at that. The Mahatma would go to the riot-affected areas, plead with the people and hold prayer meetings. After every prayer meeting, funds were collected for the Muslim sufferers.

Mahatma Gandhi's visits to Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar had tremendous impact for the pacification of these tortured areas. It seemed a miracle that a single person could do so much to bring comfort to the sufferers and quench the hatred and vindictiveness between the two communities.

In spite of what Mahatma Gandhi achieved by his personal devotion to the human cause, these happenings in Calcutta and East Bengal were to prove with the passage of time that a fatal blow had been dealt to the unity of India.

How did many of us in the distant Punjab view these fateful political developments which took place in New Delhi and Bombay in June and July and finally the communal savagery in Calcutta as a sequence to the Cabinet Mission plan? While the May 16 plan tried to reconcile the irreconcilables, the Congress and the Muslim League points of view, it seemed very doubtful if either party would have faithfully adhered to it over a long period. Even if both had formally expressed willingness to implement the plan, they had to face the fact that some of its provisions were quite contrary to their fundamental ideologies. For Jinnah, for example, the proposals may have been better than "a moth-eaten Pakistan," but it certainly was not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's aspirations. The latter's resolve to attain "fully sovereign Pakistan" through the Cabinet Mission plan betrayed its lack of faith in the constitutional system envisaged in the plan that it had formally accepted. The League possibly hoped that with a weak centre, the Sections or the groups of the Muslim-majority provinces could bolt away. The Congress party had obviously been worried about such an eventuality. That would explain its interpretation of the plan that each province would have the choice whether or not to join the Section to which it had been assigned. Such an option, it must have been hoped, would result in two or three provinces staying out of the Muslim-majority Sections, thus seriously undermining their strength. The Congress had no difficulty in accepting a great measure of autonomy for the provinces, hoping that if some Muslim provinces stayed out of Sections B and C, the Central Government could, with the passage of time, acquire greater powers with the general consensus of the Provincial Governments and through the Constituent Assembly. The Congress thus hoped to sap the very concept of Pakistan and achieve a united India with a strong Central Government.

In particular, Jinnah's peremptory demand to be the sole spokesman of the Muslims of India and to have the exclusive right to nominate Muslim members of the Central Executive Council seemed to us in the Punjab patently arbitrary. Did the Congress, then, have to seek Jinnah's permission to nominate to the Executive Council Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, its own president and a Muslim scholar of international renown? On the contrary, in accordance with the constitutionally accepted practices, Maulana Azad should have been designated as the Head of the proposed Council, he being the president of the majority party. Again, how could Jinnah be the sole representative of the Muslims when in the Punjab, the Muslim-majority province, the Muslim Premier, Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, was opposed to the Muslim League and had been elected by defeating three Muslim League opponents? If

the principles of the unity of India and equal respect for all religious faiths were accepted, as, indeed, they were in the Cabinet Mission plan, Sir Khizar, in my view, would have been an ideal choice for the Central Executive of India in a secular democracy.

What we found appalling were the strict limitations on the powers of the Federal Government. But for foreign affairs, defence and communications, all other powers were to be exercised by the Provincial Governments or the Sectional Governments of the provinces. How could the dream of an economically and politically strong Indian nation after the end of colonialism be realized with such a hamstrung Federal Government having no control over national currency and customs, no authority to plan the nation's economic development by launching major irrigational and hydroelectric projects and by exploiting the nation's mineral resources for a technological and industrial revolution? And what powers had the federal authority to ensure fundamental rights to all the citizens in various provinces and to undertake effective measures in case of national emergency? What respect could such a weak Federal Government inspire internationally? Unless the major political parties were to make big concessions and achieve mutual accommodation in the Constituent Assembly to build a strong Federal Government, the structure set up by the Cabinet plan seemed too frail to last. Obviously, it was for this objective of a strong Federal Government that the Congress party had expressed its reservations about the plan, tried to put its own interpretations on it and wanted the Constituent Assembly to have much wider powers. Jinnah was naturally wary of the Congress party's aims and could foresee a further threat to his cherished goal of a "sovereign Pakistan." The Muslim League finally rejected the Cabinet Mission plan and opted for violence to achieve Pakistan.

The historic drama played at the meetings of the Muslim League and the Congress party in June, July and August could only end in tragedy—the demolition of the hoped for structure of united India planned by the Cabinet Mission. The "Great Calcutta killings" of August 16 were the prelude to another tragedy in which hundreds of thousands were to be murdered and millions rendered homeless.

Rapid Deterioration of Law and Order in the Punjab

As the days passed, I became convinced that the Muslim League leaders had concluded that the only way Pakistan could be achieved was by a more intensive campaign of inter-religious hatred and violence. In the Punjab, as a result of the Muslim League's firm resolve to topple the

democratically elected Government and its constant propaganda inciting religious passions, there were frequent communal riots in the various districts. Communal gangs from both sides ruled the roost. Strangely enough, although the campaign of religious hatred was being spread all over India, the organized killings had started mainly in the two Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal where the Muslim position was the strongest.

By September-October 1946, the communal riots were widespread in most districts of the Punjab. The Governor, Sir Evan Jenkins, rushed to a dozen districts to talk to the local leaders, appealing to them to throw their weight in bringing about peace. I received him in Sargodha in March 1947 when he addressed meetings of the District Board, the District Soldiers and Airmen Board and the Municipal Commissioners, appealing to all leaders not to stir up communal hatred but to work for peace and goodwill. Talking to me, he stressed that it was in the fundamental interest of the Punjab that communal harmony should be maintained. Referring to the Muslim League's agitation against the Coalition Government, he said that he would have been much happier if the Muslim League had also been represented in the Cabinet, or, in the alternative, the Muslim League had formed a Ministry with a substantial number of Congress and Panthic leaders joining it.

The law and order situation was now getting out of control with widespread riots, and police had to open fire almost daily in various cities. The Governor of the Punjab and the Punjab Premier agreed that it was necessary to promulgate some special ordinances granting wider powers to the Government and the District Magistrates to deal with the situation. Sir Khizar was clear in his mind that these well-organized riots had to be put down with force. While promulgating the Public Safety Ordinance on November 19, 1946, he gave a warning that even Martial Law would be imposed, if necessary, to preserve law and order and to ensure peace in the province.

In Shahpur district, we had peaceful conditions and did not have a single incident of violence. Now and then, my Superintendent of Police would bring some reports from a few places about the collection of arms and threats of violence held out by the Muslim League National Guards. I had asked him to keep a vigilant eye but not to panic about it. After the promulgation of the Punjab Public Safety Ordinance, he felt charged with a much more serious responsibility. His inspectors brought detailed reports from two or three places from where the Muslim League National Guards were operating and where they had collected large caches of arms. One of these was the rural mansion of Nawab Allah Yar Khan Tiwana, who was the vice-president of the

District Board with me as the official president. I had found him quite cooperative and very deferential and had, therefore, high regard for him. One evening the Superintendent of Police, Rai Bahadur Ram Singh, brought the whole file about the Muslim League National Guards' activities and informed me that the same evening they had searched the residence of Nawab Allah Yar Khan from where the National Guard had been operating, and had recovered a big collection of unlicensed arms from there. He shocked me by adding that he had brought the Nawab Sahib to the Sargodha Headquarters where he was being detained in the Guest House guarded by the police. He also tried to assure me that very satisfactory arrangements had been made for his meals and comfort adding that he would bring the Nawab Sahib to see me the next morning.

The virtual arrest of the Nawab Sahib perturbed me. He was a well-known and highly respected personage of the district. But I could not fault the Superintendent of Police who had merely done his duty. I asked him to inform the Nawab Sahib that I would come over to see him next morning. When I met Nawab Sahib I conveyed my regrets for what had happened. He did not protest and I thought it prudent to switch to some other subjects, such as the working of the District Board and the wise advice and sincere cooperation which I always received from him. We discussed one or two specific cases which concerned health and educational programmes for the rural ares. Before leaving, I suggested to him that, since some action must be taken according to the law, I would like to simply order that he should stay out of Shahpur district for a few months. He appreciated my gesture and agreed to leave within the next three or four days for Lahore where he had a residence and could stay there as long as I wished. As I had great respect for Nawab Sahib, I paid him a courtesy call on my next visit to Lahore.

The Punjab Public Safety Act did not prove sufficiently effective as, according to the Government, the increasing violence was thoroughly planned by the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS) and the Muslim League National Guard (MLNG), which were both organized on military lines. The Government, therefore, decided to ban both, declaring them unlawful under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. The reaction of the Muslim League was very strong, and it announced its determination to defy the laws. A day later some Muslim League Members of the Assembly were arrested for breaking the law.

The Interim Government in New Delhi and the British Prime Minister's Declaration of February 20, 1947

The Muslim League having rejected the Cabinet Mission plan, there was no hope of convening the Constituent Assembly. The Viceroy, however, persisted that an Interim Government of Indian leaders should be formed at an early date. Accordingly he invited in early August both the Congress and the Muslim League to join in an Interim Government. When the Muslim League refused, the Congress president was asked to form the Government without the Muslim League representatives. As the communal situation in the country seriously deteriorated after the Calcutta riots in August, the Viceroy continued to press Jinnah to accept the Cabinet Mission plan and to agree to the Muslim League joining the Interim Government. By the middle of October, Jinnah agreed to nominate five Muslim League members including Liaquat Ali Khan, I.I. Chundriqar, Abdur Rab Nishtar, and Ghazanfar Ali Khan to join the Cabinet.

Many of us in the Punjab, as all over the country, were greatly relieved. I felt it was a great event as, for the first time, the Congress and Muslim League leaders, instead of hurling accusations against each other in public, would be daily sitting around the same table frankly discussing serious national questions and formulating joint decisions to resolve them. With all the talk of a separate Islamic culture and Islamic nationality, would not Liaquat Ali Khan, while discussing the nation's everyday administrative and political problems with Nehru, acutely realize that both of them represented the best of the centuries-old Indo-Islamic culture and the language of the United Provinces which were, perhaps, somewhat different from the cultures and the languages of the Punjab and the NWFP to which, for political propaganda Liaquat Ali claimed to belong? I hopefully imagined that serious and pragmatic preoccupation with national issues, instead of the constant recriminatory propaganda, would promote better understanding, mutual goodwill and respect between the top leaders of the two parties in the Interim Government.

Unfortunately, the news from Delhi in the coming months did not bring any solace. All reports indicated that the Muslim League, committed to its cherished goal of Pakistan, had joined the Interim Government to disrupt it from within. There was constant confrontation between the representatives of the two parties on almost every issue of domestic and foreign policy. There was, as Liaquat Ali Khan put it, " 'a Congress bloc and a Muslim bloc, each functioning under a separate leadership'. Each began to attract to itself its own supporters from

among the civil servants and to build up its own separate and exclusive empire. As a Coalition Government, it was a farce."[8]

It was also generally hoped, and that was Nehru's condition for the entry of the Muslim League in the Interim Government, that the League would reaccept the May 16 plan. The Viceroy made some attempts, but Jinnah flatly refused.

The attempts to convene the Constituent Assembly and to narrow the differences between the Congress and the Muslim League proved futile in spite of British Prime Minister Attlee's efforts, inviting the leaders of the two parties to London for discussion. While the national administration was collapsing and communal violence was becoming widespread, the British Government felt apprehensive about the continuing stalemate. To make the Indian leaders realize the gravity of their responsibilities, Prime Minister Attlee announced in the House of Commons on February 20 that it was the British Government's "definite intention to take necessary steps to effect the transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948." It was further explained that this date would be honoured even if there were no agreement between the parties and no Constitution framed in accordance with the terms of the Cabinet Mission plan. In that case, the British Government would have to consider "to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on the due date, whether as a whole to some form of Central Government for British India, or in some areas to the existing Provincial Governments, or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people." This statement officially accepted partition of India, and it was obvious that the Muslim League's demand for a Pakistan constituted of some provinces of India had been conceded.

With his determined opposition to the liquidation of the Empire, Winston Churchill was horrified at Attlee's announcement. He said in the House of Commons on March 6, 1947:

> Let the House remember this. The Indian political parties and political classes do not represent the Indian masses. It is a delusion to believe that they do. I wish they did. . . The Congress party declared non-cooperation with Great Britain and the Allies. The other great political party, to whom all main power is to be given, the Muslim League, sought to make a bargain about it, but no bargain was made. . . In handing over the government of India to

[8]Penderel Moon: *Divide and Quit*.

> these so-called political classes we are handing over to men of straw, of whom, in a few years, no trace will remain. . .
>
> This Government, by their latest action, this 14 months limitation—which is what I am coming to—will cripple the new Viceroy and destroy the prospect of even going through the business on the agenda which has to be settled. . .

No one asked Churchill who in his view represented the Indian masses if not the Congress party and the Muslim League. Was it the British administrators and the Governors?

Lord Mountbatten, who arrived in New Delhi on March 22, was to devise ways to implement the partition unless he could, by some miracle, still bring about a compromise between the parties to form a loose federation on the basis of the Cabinet Mission proposals. By now any such hopes were chimerical as, while the Muslim League had no faith, whatsoever, in any commitment by the Congress and was determined to have an independent State of Pakistan, the Congress had agonizingly realized that working together with the Muslim League would not only mean confrontation and conflict on every issue and in every department but also the disintegration of the civil and military services and a drift towards civil war.

The Punjab Situation and the Resignation of the Unionist Ministry

Premier Sir Khizar Hayat Khan was meanwhile in a highly disconcerting position. On the one hand, he seemed determined to maintain law and order with a heavy hand and, on the other, there was the hatred campaign against him by the communal fanatics who accused him of crushing their liberties. The Muslim League was determined to break the law and to make his position untenable by courting large-scale arrests. He discussed the situation again with his colleagues and within four days of promulgating the ban against the RSS and the Muslim League he withdrew it. This underlined the inherent dilemma of the Coalition Ministry in the face of the opposition of the Muslim League party and the violent designs of the RSS and the Muslim League National Guard. Sir Khizar still tried to explain away the reversal of his Government's decision by stating that this was done "to allay all accusations regarding the Government's intention of curbing the liberties by banning these associations." The Government, he said, was prepared to take the risk and appealed to all communities to maintain law and order and communal peace. As was to be expected, the

defiance of the Public Safety Order continued and more than 500 people were under custody within a few days.

There was no response to Sir Khizar's warning that the Government would not yield to threats intended to reduce the Punjab to political and communal chaos. He again tried to assure the people that there was no desire to suppress the Muslim League but he would appeal to all to maintain communal peace.

Immediately after Sir Khizar's volte-face in withdrawing the ban on the RSS and Muslim League National Guard, strong speeches by the Muslim League leaders claimed that by right they should have been put in office after the general elections and they could no longer tolerate the Coalition Ministry. They threatened direct action against Sir Khizar's Government. Shaukat Hayat Khan, one of the leaders of the Muslim League, was reported to have said: "Khizar's Ministry must be made to go, no matter what cost to the Muslim League. We would put out 15 million Muslims to break the law."

For Sir Khizar it was the crucial test whether his Government could discharge its responsibility to maintain law and order. After an uneasy day of demonstrations on January 28, he delivered a counter-attack and got all the top leaders of the Muslim League arrested. This was his last effort at standing firmly for his ideal and for asserting the constitutional authority of the Government: He displayed rare courage, but it was obvious that his authority to maintain law and order was crumbling. In the words of Sir Evan Jenkins: "The sympathies of the Muslim officials (including about 70 per cent of the police) were mainly with the Muslim League."

This assertion is also supported by the following extract from Sikh Minister Sardar Baldev Singh's letter to Lord Wavell on March 11, 1947:

> I make no secret of my conviction that Muslim League's onslaught on the coalition Ministry had been engineered in the way it was because the League had despaired of being able to defeat it by constitutional methods.
>
> It would be relevant here for me to observe that throughout the period when the League were staging its demonstration and in the course of which extreme lawlessness was preached and practised, the police and the administration generally stood literally aside.
>
> I wish to lay the greatest emphasis on the fact that the Muslim League has not achieved its objective by just or constitutional methods. It was in fact sheer hooliganism, of the vilest type. The fact that its leader has not been able to secure a majority even to this

day is significant. I cannot understand how when palpably illegal and unconstitutional methods were employed to oust a coalition which enjoyed a majority in the Legislative, a minority group could have been invited to capture office.[9]

Then, for Sir Khizar and his Government came suddenly the announcement of His Majesty's Government on February 20 to the effect that it would transfer the power of British India to Indian hands not later than June 8, 1948. This would have, naturally, meant negotiations between the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs in regard to the future constitutional status of the Punjab. Sir Khizar came to the conclusion that he must resign so that the Muslim League would be compelled to face the realities of the situation without delay. In his opinion, the League had no idea so far of the strength of the Hindu and Sikh feelings against it because the Muslim Unionists had been acting as a buffer. On March 2, 1947, all the members of the Coalition Cabinet submitted their resignation. The Governor asked the leader of the Muslim League party, the Nawab of Mamdot, to form the Ministry but there could be little doubt that with the total non-cooperation of the Hindus and Sikhs, no stable Ministry could be formed by the Muslim League even if it could get the support of a few Scheduled Castes members.

It was a wise decision on the part of Sir Khizar to resign. He felt that he could not possibly represent the Muslim masses in the future constitutional discussions between the parties and this responsibility must rest with the Muslim League. By resigning, he made way for direct negotiations for the future of the Punjab between the parties representing three major communities of the province.

A couple of weeks after his resignation, Sir Khizar drove back from Lahore to his estate Kalra in the Shahpur district. It was suddenly announced to me at my residence that he had arrived and I received him with my usual warmth and respect. Sad, indeed, were the circumstances in which this great leader, who had worked so selflessly for the economic and social progress of the Punjab and for peace and goodwill between different communities, had to resign. I asked him if it was not possible for him to carry on, because his Government commanded the support of the majority and was quite stable in the Assembly. A democratically elected Government, rather than the Governor's rule, I said, would have been most desirable when crucial negotiations were in the offing to decide the future constitutional

[9]Secret Documents, British Archives, *The Transfer of Power 1942-1947*, Vol. X, p.917.

status of the Punjab and India. He repeated his very cogent argument, which he had publicly expressed before, that with the announcement of the final transfer of power by the British Prime Minister, the constitutional future of the Punjab must be discussed by the Muslim League leaders directly with the leaders of the Hindu and Sikh communities: He could not presume to assume a role which must now devolve upon the Muslim League. Besides, it had become quite impossible for him to continue amidst the agitation of the Muslim League mobs. The hostile demonstrations held outside his house and the abusive slogans hurled at him round the clock had been too much for his mother's nerves.

He was extremely unhappy with the attitude of the Indian leaders in New Delhi. Nehru and others were letting down the great heritage of India, he said, and were succumbing to the temptation, willingly or in sheer disgust, of getting immediate independence at any cost. How could he stand up for the ideals he believed in, when the leaders in Delhi, on whom rested the main responsibility for India's future, had lost hope and courage?

Also, he had to make way for others. He could lay some claim to represent the province of the Punjab in any national discussion, but now the national leaders had veered round to partition in some form or other. Hence the negotiations in the Punjab had to be between the leaders of the three communities. He foresaw a grim future for the Punjab, for which he squarely blamed the civil and police officials of the province who had encouraged communal hatred and bloodshed.

I was taken aback when he said, just before leaving: "I leave for my estate now to reside there, but whenever I come to see you in the future, please give me the last chair after those who are already waiting outside your office to see you. I am now a zamindar of your district and must be treated as such." I protested and said that I would, any time he wished, drive to his estate to see him and that if he ever came to see me, I would personally receive him.

His suggestion was a legacy both of the old traditions and courtesies of this region as well as of the formalities of the British administration. I recall another incident illustrating a similar custom. Sir Allah Bakhsh, who was a big landlord in Shahpur district and was highly respected in the Punjab political and official circles, once invited me to his estate. Some three miles outside his village, I was received by an escort of nearly 60 horsemen with Sir Allah Bakhsh in the lead, and a couple of riders flying banners. While tremendously impressed I was also discomfited that the revered Sir Allah Bakhsh should have taken the

trouble. In the evening, he held a lavish community dinner, made a nice speech and had a fireworks display to mark the occasion.

Collapse of the Administration in the Punjab

Sir Khizar's resignation plunged the Punjab into the throes of communal carnage, arson and looting. Fear stalked the cities, bringing life almost to standstill. Blood flowed in the streets of Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Sialkot, Amritsar and Jullunder. Trains were being attacked and Hindus and Sikhs were systematically being butchered in the small towns and villages. Several thousands came under the sword. It appeared that while the Punjab burnt, the British officers in charge of the districts slept. Nehru visited Multan and appealed to all communities to form a peace committee. Aghast at what he saw, he said: "I have seen ghastly sights; I have heard of the behaviour of human beings which could be a disgrace even to beasts." Throughout this period Lahore and Amritsar were ablaze, bombs exploded throughout the day and night and there was no law and order whatsoever.

The news from the district of Gurgaon, just 20 miles from New Delhi, was stupefying. Under the very nose of the Central Government battles raged for weeks on between the Meos (who are Muslims) and Hindus. Scores of villages came under the torch and thousands perished. Nehru, Patel and Liaquat Ali visited the district and were horrified. It was the saddest proof of how the administration was crumbling.

The Governor of Punjab flew down to Gurgaon. At a time when the whole of India was aghast at the burning of the villages and the bloody battles in this district, he said: "It is impossible for me to be in close touch with the Delhi District Commander and I have little news from Gurgaon."[10] I wondered what explanation the British Commissioner in charge of this division had to give, although his office was located in Ambala, some 150 miles in the West. In the middle of June, Governor Jenkins reported, from some 250 miles away from the district, to Lord Mountbatten who was just 20 miles away from the scene:

> Gurgaon situation generally out of hand. Our resources there have been inadequate and we have so many commitments that it is quite impossible to make police and troops available in the numbers required to suppress quickly what amounts to primitive war. I would fly over to Gurgaon again if I were not so busy here with the preparations for partition.[11]

10 *The Transfer of Power 1942-1947.*
11 Ibid.

What a pathetic admission by a British Governor to the Governor General in a country which was still being ruled by the British with their army and civil services!

From what I knew of Sir Evan Jenkins, I would have been most reluctant to blame him. He fervently hoped for the unity of the Punjab, and for cordial and peaceful relations between the three communities and was firm both with the political leaders as well as with the administrators if they faltered in ensuring inter-religious peace and safety of the minorities. But his pleas, at this stage, of helplessness when high qualities of administrative competence and courage were called for, did shock me.

Persistent reports indicated that many British officers abetted the Muslims during 1946 and 1947 against the Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab. In the Rawalpindi Division, for example, widespread riots, looting, massacres and arson took place only in the four districts of Rawalpindi, Campbellpur. Attock and Jhelum, which were under the control of the British officers. In telling contrast was the situation in the neighbouring districts, such as Sargodha where I was Deputy Commissioner, and Lyallpur where Agha Abdul Hamid, another Indian ICS officer, was Deputy Commissioner, where not a single communal clash nor any murder nor arson took place during the whole of 1946 and until June 1947. The district of Mianwali, which was under the charge of a Muslim Provincial Service officer, also continued to be peaceful. Forsaking their responsibility the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi taunted the thousands of refugees who had fled in terror of the burning of the villages, the looting and the murder: "Go to your Nehru and Patel. They wanted independence. They should look after you."

Pained at these reports, Nehru said at the All-India Congress Committee Session in New Delhi in the middle of June:

> The riots in Punjab, Bengal and elsewhere are no isolated riots. They are planned attacks. It seems the administration is broken down and there is no authority left to enforce law and order. How is it that British officers, who coped with the civil disobedience movements in the past are unable to cope with the present disturbances? In the Punjab, where there is cent per cent British rule, despite the efforts of certain senior officers, murders and arsons continue.

Even Governor Jenkins, in his report to Lord Mountbatten, acknowledged the following criticisms by the leaders of the minorities:

(a) The British were able to crush the 1942 disturbances all over India but failed to do so in 1947.
(b) The British officials have been callous and incompetent and have taken the line that, since the Britishers are going, why should they bother about arson, looting and murders.
(c) That in the Punjab the worst districts have been those staffed by British officials. Indian officials have managed to maintain order.
(d) The Congress Government have had no difficulty in suppressing disturbances—the worst province of all has been the Punjab, which is still under British rule.

All these criticisms, he said, were levelled by Congress leaders and by Nehru and Patel.[12]

There was also strong criticism against Sir Olaf Caroe, the Governor of the North-West Frontier Province, who could not, according to reports, stand the Congress Government commanding absolute majority of the Muslim voters there. Yet, he had to admit that there were no leaders in the Muslim League comparable to the Khan brothers. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan felt constrained to complain to Lord Mountbatten about his pro-Muslim League attitude and his efforts to oust the Congress Premier Dr. Khan Sahib. The senior British officers, it was complained, were following the example of the Governor and were responsible for atrocities against the minorities. At the same meeting with Lord Mountbatten, on April 4, Gandhi expressed his fear that there were many British members of the ICS, particularly among the highly placed, who could not bear to see the British leave India and who had all along maintained that if they could only support the Muslim League actively to the point at which it could be held that the British could not leave India to civil war, they would be compelled to stay.[13]

By now the entire political and social atmosphere of the Punjab had undergone a calamitous and irredeemable change. Gone were the days when there was mutual goodwill, trust and happy cooperation between the communities. Instead, fear, hatred, anger, and resort to violence had become the order of the day. From the Muslim League's point of view, the partition of the Punjab and its inclusion in Pakistan was now within its grasp. By generating widespread hatred, the objective had been achieved. The chance of Muslims and non-Muslims living and working together peacefully in towns and villages, which they had done for centuries, had been totally snuffed.

[12]Ibid.
[13]Ibid.

As a result, by early April the Sikh leaders who had stoutly opposed the partition of the Punjab unanimously demanded that the province be divided. The Punjab Assembly Congress party too, did likewise. Both parties sent a representation to Nehru appealing for immediate division of the Punjab as the situation had become most dangerous.

The Asian Relations Conference

While gruesome communal killings were threatening the stability of the administration, and final blows were being dealt to cut the Indian body politic into two or three parts, I read news of Nehru's sponsoring the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi. No leader, howsoever great, in any country would have had the time or the heart, in the prevailing circumstances to look beyond his national frontiers. But, as I was to see more closely in later years, Nehru was deeply dedicated to the ideals of international understanding, peace and cooperation and he would always stand firmly for these ideals whatever the circumstances. With Western imperialism on the retreat, and the Asian consciousness reawakening after the long isolationism imposed by the colonial powers, Nehru felt that the representatives of the Asian countries should get together to exchange views on the political, economic and social challenges facing them and the contribution they could jointly make to international peace.

The international response to this conference held in New Delhi for ten days at the end of March was astonishingly impressive. More than 250 delegates from twenty-four countries attended, including some from rather distant countries like Korea, Philippines, Outer Mongolia, and six Asian republics of the Soviet Union along with the observers from Australia and New Zealand.

As a result of the reports of the Commissions, there were useful discussions on the support for national independence movements, on opposition to any racial discrimination and on the agricultural reconstruction and industrial development in the Asian countries and cooperation among them in the economic, cultural and social fields.

Reading the press reports I was impressed with the emotional unity and the ideological kinship among the Asian countries which developed as a result of the ten days of meetings and discussions between their delegates. This was the first occasion when they demonstrated that in the future their voices would be heard in the councils of the world, thus asserting the Asian personality. As Nehru, the President of the Conference, said at the inaugural session:

> For too long we of Asia have been petitioners in Western Courts and Chanceries. That story must now belong to the past. We propose to stand on our own feet and to cooperate with all others who are prepared to cooperate with us. We do not intend to be the playthings of others.

Since some views had started appearing in the Western press criticizing the Conference as a pan-Asian movement directed against Europe and America, Nehru affirmed in the Conference that: "We have no designs against anybody, ours is the great design of promoting peace and progress all over the world." Mahatma Gandhi also addressed the delegates and appealed to them to work for the realization of the ideal of "one world." The purpose of the Conference, he said, was to seek to bring about world cooperation.

In the context of the Congress and Muslim League relations in the Interim Government and always hoping for some concord between the two parties at least on issues which did not impinge upon their ideologies or political programmes, it came as a shock when I read that the Muslim League had boycotted the Conference alleging that it was a "thinly disguised attempt on the part of the Hindu Congress to boost itself politically." I wish they had taken into consideration the fact that more than half a dozen Muslim countries including Iran, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaya, Afghanistan, Palestine as well as six Soviet Muslim Republics were attending the Conference. It would have been worthy of the Muslim League representatives to be seen with other Asian Islamic delegates especially when they had come from distant lands to New Delhi.

2

Lord Mountbatten's Announcement of the Partition Plan

Basic Features of the Plan and its Effects in the Punjab

Lord Mountbatten announced his plan of the partition of India on June 2 which was accepted by the political parties. According to the plan, the Muslim-majority provinces had to decide whether they wished to join the already elected Constituent Assembly thereby agreeing to remain members of the Indian Union or in the alternative, whether they wanted a new Constituent Assembly of their own thereby opting for Pakistan. In the Punjab, the Legislative Assembly members were to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim-majority districts, i.e., the West Punjab and the other representing the Hindu-Sikh majority districts of East Punjab. A decision by either part of the Assembly by a simple majority vote in favour of partition would mean that the Punjab would be partitioned. In Assam, the district of Sylhet was given the option to decide if it wanted to join East Bengal. The announcement of the plan led to further outbursts of communal riots in most towns of the Punjab and one read daily of pitched battles, mass murders, bombings and arson in various districts.

Since the question of partition had to be decided by the elected representatives of the Punjab, the Governor General made an announcement that the Punjab Assembly should meet in two separate groups to decide the issue. These two groups, numbering 72 members of East Punjab and 102 members of West Punjab, met on June 23. The result of the meetings was the acceptance of the partition of the Punjab. The East Punjab Assembly members refused to continue their links with the West Punjab.

Hurried preparations had to be made now for the functioning of the two new Governments independently—one from Lahore and the other from Simla. This meant immediate dissection of all the services,

division of assets and sharing of the official records of every department of the Government. The delegations of the two sides working overtime for several weeks were able to accomplish this before August 15 when these two parts of the Punjab became foreign territories to each other.

My Transfer to Simla (June 1947)

In the beginning of June I received an urgent telegram from the Governor of the Punjab that I was being transferred as District Commissioner to Simla immediately. It had been decided that with the impending partition of India, non-Muslim officers from West Pakistan should be moved to India and Muslim officers from India should be allowed to go to West Pakistan.

Simla had earned international fame as the summer capital of the Government of India. It used to be an incredible administrative arrangement for any Central Government looking after the affairs of such a vast nation. All Government offices in New Delhi used to close down in the middle of April and the officials started packing and shifting to this remote city in the Himalayas, more than a thousand miles away from the main cities of Karachi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.

Moving all the important offices of the Government of India including the Civil Secretariat, the Army Headquarters, with all their officials and staff and the National Assembly to a remote corner of the Himalayas cut off from the main cities of India, meant a couple of weeks to pack up all the files and official papers and transport them by trains, along with the personnel, to Simla and then take another week or two to set up offices there. Similarly, the Punjab Government from Lahore used to shift to this summer capital in Simla East. Then, in the middle of September, would begin the return journey again with train loads of the personnel, the files and documents coming down the hills and taking another week or ten days to set up the offices in New Delhi.

In the modern world that would be seen as a ridiculous, irresponsible and wasteful practice but that was the world of colonialism. The practice stopped with the formation of the Interim Coalition Government when Nehru and other leaders could not think of deserting the capital, New Delhi, and going to a remote and inaccessible hill station for five months, when national problems needed day-to-day attention.

On August 14, 1947, the Union Jack was lowered for the last time from the residence and the office of the District Commissioner and

from other judicial and municipal offices. The next day was the great day of the dawn of India's independence. On the morning of August 15, we hoisted the Indian flag for the first time at the Municipal Square with the singing of the National Anthem and playing of the bands. Huge crowds had assembled to watch and rejoice at the ceremony. An hour later, similar ceremonies were held one mile up the hill at the headquarters of the newly constituted East Punjab Government. For a few weeks the serene air of this beautiful hill station with its lush greenery was permeated with the enchanting sense of happiness and glory.

Army and the Civil Service—Legacy of the British

In the peaceful atmosphere of the Simla hill station, I would reflect on the defence and civil administrative structure that the British were leaving behind when quitting India. To pass a fair judgement, I had to overlook the examples of the administrative derelictions and debacles in some districts during the communal violence.

The army and the civil services of independent India had traditions of which any nation could be rightly proud. The Indian army was highly respected as a brave fighting force with its admirable record of service at war fronts in India and abroad. People felt proud of the Indian army's traditions of courage, integrity, loyalty and discipline. The officers and men were strictly non-political in their outlook and behaviour and they considered the defence of the country their foremost and honourable responsibility. In the future, this was to prove a great asset to India's national security and stability.

The higher Civil Service, i.e., the Indian Civil Service also enjoyed very high public prestige. Its members were men of high education and culture and had to undergo serious administrative and judicial training for a number of years. They were admired for their dedication to their duty and their integrity was beyond doubt. To them their job was a calling and not a profession. This was also true of the judicial service whose independence from political interference was strictly respected.

A peculiar aspect of the civil administration was the concentration of power with the District Commissioner. He was the head of the magistrates, Chief Executive for revenue and civil administration and the Superintendent of Police and his officers functioned under his orders. Such concentration of power in one man would have been criticized anywhere as undemocratic but it was the integrity of these people that ensured that these powers were exercised in a fair manner

for the welfare of the general public.*

The British officers, too, took extreme care to respect the sensitivities of their Indian colleagues. I do not remember a single occasion in eight years serving from a junior post to the position of the Deputy Commissioner that there was ever an occasion when I felt offended by the attitude or a remark of a British colleague junior or even very senior. It was amazing that over so many years one should not have had a single incident where one felt that any of one's British colleagues was being arrogant or supercilious.

I recall, for example, Financial Commissioner, J.D. Penny, travelling with me for one week in the rural areas of Nilibar Colony where I was Colonization Officer. We used to go out to inspect villages on horseback for three hours in the morning and evening and had our meals together in Government rest-houses. If anything, I found him a very informal and warm-hearted officer discussing administrative and rural development problems in a frank and friendly manner.

I could, perhaps, recall a solitary incident in several years when I felt a little hurt. This happened when I was Sub-Divisional Magistrate in Dalhousie and the Deputy Commissioner was one William Kennedy. Dalhousie was a charming hill station in the Himalayas and had also a military cantonment. It had beautiful villas, luxury hotels, restaurants and shopping centres and I was very happy to be posted there as Chief Executive —a post which was usually reserved for the British officers. In fact, my posting itself was an unusual gesture to me. A few weeks before the termination of my previous hard post in Hissar district, I wrote to the Chief Secretary, F.C. Bourne, mentioning that I was going to be married in the beginning of May and suggesting whether I could be considered for the post of Sub-Divisional Officer in Dalhousie which was going to fall vacant. Bourne was good enough to send me an immediate telegram of congratulation and advising me that I should proceed to Dalhousie at my convenience after the wedding.

My would-be wife Shamie Grewal and I were together at the Forman Christian College, Lahore, in 1932-34. We had not actually met though I used to greatly admire her from a distance as she was the leader of our Debating Society and had won several trophies in College

*It was because of their high standards of competence, keen sense of public duty and integrity that after India's independence, Nehru and Patel reposed full confidence in the Indian members of the ICS who were asked to hold the highest administrative and diplomatic jobs. Although they had to function in a most unenviable situation as members of the British administration when the grim struggle for national independence was taking place, all over India, their sense of patriotism was never called into question.

and University debates. She later joined the King Edward Medical College in Lahore.

We got to know each other for the first time in 1941 in district Hissar where her brother, a senior ICS officer, was the District Commissioner and I was the Assistant Commissioner. After our meetings for about six months, we decided to get married on May 12, 1942. I said I always admired Shamie's brilliant performance at the College and University debates, but must affectionately confess that she never, not once, exercised her debating talent on me in our married life. She has been a wonderfully devoted and caring wife. But let me revert to the incident in Dalhousie.

One day when I was hearing a criminal case as Sub-Divisional Magistrate in Dalhousie, a young British subaltern pushed himself into the court room and complained loudly that the Treasury Officer was keeping him waiting and that he could not stand it any longer. As Sub-Divisional Magistrate, I was also the head of the Treasury Department. While whispering to the Clerk of the Court to speak to the Treasury Officer, I politely told the officer that he had no business to enter the court room and intrude during the judicial proceedings. The officer said even more loudly that he would not be kept waiting by the Treasury Officer. I was left with no option but to ask the Police Officer on duty in the court room to show the military officer out warning him that this sort of intervention could lead to his being charged with contempt of court. The officer apparently got the message and I heard nothing more about it.

Two days later, Kennedy, the Deputy Commissioner, sent for me and over a cup of tea referred to this incident. He tried to convey to me that what I had done was not really proper as it involved the self-respect of the young military officer and affected the prestige of the army. I presumed that the Commanding Officer of the Cantonment had brought the incident to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner. In reply, I asked him what he would have done in those circumstances. Would he have allowed a military officer to shout in a court room while he was presiding over a judicial bench in a criminal case? I explained that I really did not think I had any choice but to act in the manner I did, to maintain the prestige of the court. To my surprise, Kennedy looked apologetic and agreed that the officer should have behaved better. This was, as I said, the only incident where any British officer ever tried to show disregard to my sensitivities. My other Indian colleagues gave me the same impression of receiving utmost courtesy from their British colleagues.

Communal Tension in Simla

The serenity and the peace of Simla did not last long. About the end of August, I could sense a strange tension in the air of the city. Walking along from my house to the District Courts, I started noting that the usual smiles and warm greetings had given place to indifference and even scowls on the faces of the shopkeepers and passers by on the main street.

As days passed, the tension and resentment among the people became more palpable. The resentment, one soon found, was because refugees from Pakistan seeking shelter in Simla and around narrated to all and sundry eyewitness accounts of communal violence and of lootings and murders not only in their home districts but throughout their journey from the West Punjab to the East Punjab. As a consequence, the people in Simla were also getting into a vengeful mood, and, to start with, we had a couple of incidents in the distant suburbs of Simla. It appeared that some organizations were being set up to take revenge against the Muslims, who numbered a few thousand families in the district including some leading personalities (among them the vice-president of the Simla Municipal Committee). Two other incidents followed. In one case, Muslim labourers living not far from the central area were stabbed in their living quarters in the dark. In the second incident a young Muslim was murdered in a shopping centre in broad daylight. At least twenty shopkeepers of the area witnessed the crime, but none came forward to give evidence against the gangsters.

Two organizations had been inciting such acts of violence in private meetings and by issuing directives. Orders were issued to arrest some of their top leaders. The consequent detention of a number of well-known figures including a leading member of the Bar Association was strongly resented in the city. The District Commissioner and his administrators came to be bitterly hated. Even the Punjab Government Secretariat in Simla closed down for a day and Government employees marched in the main streets and on the Mall shouting abusive slogans and condemning the administration.

A couple of days later I went and saw Governor C.L. Trivedi and asked him plainly whether all the Ordinances and Regulations against communal violence had to be enforced and whether the strong speeches of Prime Minister Nehru and Sardar Patel and other leaders exhorting the administrators to put an end to violence with stern measures had to be implemented. How could, I asked, the Punjab Government allow its employees to take leave and criticize and condemn the action of the district administration which was in compliance with the Ordinances

and Regulations of the Government of Punjab and Government of India? I warned him that but for the measures we had taken the violence could spread to the suburbs of the city and more so in the valleys which are not easily accessible, resulting in the death of hundreds of innocent Muslims. Politely, the Governor approved of the action taken, but he did not indicate what steps he was going to take against the few hundred civil servants who had deserted their offices and held demonstrations against the administration.

We had taken steps in advance to get all the Muslims from the city, the suburbs and the valleys into three main camps to reduce the risk of murderous attacks on them. In these camps, thorough arrangements were made for their security and for the provision of food rations, other basic needs and adequate medical facilities.

As a part of the precautionary measures, I brought over to my house a few children of my Muslim friends in the West Punjab. Among them were the two daughters of an ICS colleague, Khalid Malik. About ten days later, in the middle of the night, Malik telephoned me, frantic with anxiety. He had arranged the call with great difficulty through army channels, as the normal telephone communications between the two parts of the Punjab were either wrecked or otherwise dead. He was almost sobbing on the telephone for not having been able to find his daughters at their school nor having got news from any other quarters. I assured him about their safety, and the parents were greatly relieved to be able to talk to their daughters on the telephone.

Sheikh Abdullah's Visit to Simla

In the middle of October, Sheikh Abdullah visited New Delhi for discussions. He was the leader of the extremely popular National Conference party of Jammu and Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah, who stood for democracy and secularism, had been waging a struggle against the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir for democratic reforms and had been imprisoned by the Government of Kashmir. After India's independence, Sheikh Abdullah had been released from jail some time in September as a result of the strong pressure on the Maharaja by the Government of India.

I had a number of Kashmiri Muslim evacuees on my hands who used to come to this summer capital in the summer months for work and would leave for Kashmir about the end of September when the Government moved down to New Delhi. Now they were stranded in this city, and anxious about their safety. I telephoned a friend, Diwan Chaman Lal, a Member of Parliament, requesting him to persuade

Sheikh Sahib to visit Simla and speak to the Kashmiris and other Muslim evacuees in the three camps. To my surprise, the response was positive. I received Sheikh Abdullah and Diwan Chaman Lal at about five o'clock one evening and we straightaway started our visits to the camps. He visited all the camps including the one down in the valley on foot and had long talks with the people assuring them of the absolute commitment of the top Indian leaders to ensure their safety and safe evacuation to their homes. Our visits of reassurance lasted till 2 a.m.

I next took him to meet the Muslim army officers whom I had accommodated in the Grand Hotel on the Mall awaiting their evacuation to Pakistan. The session, lasting a couple of hours, was punctuated by heated questioning about the prevailing communal situation in India and the fate of the Muslims. Suddenly, a Brigadier stood up and rather harshly remarked that there was communal violence and murders raging in both India and Pakistan. For months there had been massacres of innocent Muslims in India. Why did Sheikh Abdullah not condemn them? Why did he not, as a Kashmiri leader, visit Pakistan also and meet Jinnah to discuss the future of the Muslims in India and Kashmir? Sheikh Abdullah, at this stage, lost his temper. He said he had strong reason not to visit Jinnah. When there were widespread communal riots in Noakhali, Gandhi went from village to village taking personal risk and pleaded for peace and brotherhood. He visited Muslim houses, stayed with the Muslim families and pleaded for intercommunal harmony. In Calcutta, Gandhi undertook a fast unto death unless the leaders of all the communities pledged sincerely to work for goodwill and friendship between the Muslims and the Hindus. In Bihar, he spent months going from village to village, condemning the Hindus for their barbaric attacks on the Muslims and would say to them, "Kill me before you kill a Muslim." Looking the Brigadier squarely in the eye Sheikh Sahib said:

> If Mr. Jinnah had gone to some districts in Rawalpindi and Multan pleading for goodwill among the Hindus and the Muslims and getting solemn pledges from the Muslim leaders to work for peace and friendship between the two communities, I would have certainly gone to see Mr. Jinnah and to convey my respects to him.

The evacuation of some 3,000 Muslims, including permanent residents, casual visitors, students and army officers from Simla to Pakistan during the months of September and October was a task that required careful planning and maximum security arrangements. This we did by trains and road convoys from Simla to Ambala escorted by

police personnel and leading representatives of the Hindu community to ensure against any attacks on the way as had happened earlier on a couple of occasions. At Ambala, we had made arrangements in advance with the military authorities to fly them to Lahore. The administration heaved a sigh of relief when all the Muslim evacuees had been safely sent from Simla to Pakistan.

Communal Violence and Mass Migration

Helplessly we watched bloodthirsty gangs on both sides of the border fall upon the fleeing columns of refugees numbering millions and quench their blood lust with the lives of thousands of innocent men, women and children, heedless of the efforts of the Prime Ministers of both countries to stop the frenzied butchery. Regretfully, I had been naive till the last, refusing to admit the possibility of the partition of India and large-scale migration of people. Even as late as the months of April and May I had found it difficult to imagine that the communities which had lived amicably together would be at each other's throats in every city and village of the Punjab.

But I was not alone in this error of judgement. Viceroy Lord Mountbatten himself had said in his report of May 1, 1947 to Whitehall:

> The more I look at the problem in India, the more I realize that all this partition business is sheer madness and is going to reduce the economic efficiency of the whole country immeasurably. No one would have ever induced me to agree to it, were it not for this fantastic communal madness that has seized everybody and leaves no other course open.[1]

I had also been blind to the possibility of large-scale migrations between East and West Punjab. The minorities on both sides, I used to feel, were great assets to both nations and it would be in the interest of the two newly independent States to protect them and encourage them to participate fully in the lives of the new nations. Mahatma Gandhi himself had said in Noakhali on December 2 when the worst possible murders and barbarities had taken place in East Bengal:

> The question of exchange of population was unthinkable and impracticable. This question never came to my mind. In every province everyone is an Indian, be he a Hindu, a Muslim or of any

[1]Secret Documents, British Archives, *The Transfer of Power 1942-1947*, p. 540. p. 540.

> other faith. It would not be otherwise, even if Pakistan came in full. For me, any such thing will spell bankruptcy of Indian wisdom or statesmanship or both.

We also saw how in a moving address to the National Assembly of Pakistan on August 11 Quaid-i-Azam tried to inspire the people of Pakistan with the importance of their new nationality. Exhorting them to forget that they were Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs or Parsees but to think of themselves only as Pakistanis, he said:

> . . . in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority will vanish, you may belong to any religion or caste or creed, that has nothing to do with the business of the State. . . You will find that in the course of time, Hindus would cease to be Hindus, Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.

My naivete had even brought others to ruin. A wealthy Hindu in Sargodha had in the month of April wanted to sell his new house in the Civil Lines to the District Board for which he was getting a good price. He sought my advice arguing that since there was constant talk of partition of the Punjab, he would like to dispose of his property while the conditions were stable. I strongly advised him against it. Even if partition came about, I said, the members of minority communities would continue to live in the new States and would receive every protection from the new Governments. Nothing could be more devastating to the new States than to throw out the minorities which would lead to communal violence and economic disasters. He followed my advice and did not sell his house. The next time I met him in Simla, five months later, he was a refugee, haggard and woebegone. He had reached Simla almost penniless having left his properties behind. He was now appealing for some cottage to stay in Simla, which was allotted to him.

Repeatedly, when talking to friends, one asked: What was the great hurry in advancing the date of independence from June 1948 to August 15, 1947 without making foolproof military and police one country to the other? The extra ten months could have been used to concentrate military and police security forces on every route and railway line and in every important city en route to ensure safe migration of the people. Granted that the mass migration was on a much larger scale than ever anticipated by anyone, the lack of basic security arrangements in advance seemed utterly inexcusable. Even the

transfer of the administrators should have taken place much before independence was announced. The new administrators—District Commissioners, police officers, railway staff—all should have been in their positions fully prepared to take up their new responsibilities before the upheavals of the partition. Instead, when the exodus of millions of people was taking place, most of the administrative and police officers were also hurriedly taking up their new jobs with little local knowledge.

Meetings with Lord and Lady Mountbatten

Lord and Lady Mountbatten used to visit Simla with their daughter Pamela for a few days of respite from the heat and tensions of New Delhi. The Governor General was gracious enough to invite my wife and me for a reception or a dinner during his short stay. He was affable and informal in conversation, willing to share, even though in passing, his views on some national issues which should normally be reserved for national leaders.

Over the years, I have often recalled to myself one particular incident of his sharing confidence with me. One evening, we were at a reception at the Viceregal Lodge at Simla with some dozen other eminent guests. As we were entering the banquet hall, Lord Mountbatten stopped me at the entrance and mentioned that Jinnah was greatly shocked at the partitioning of the provinces of Bengal and the Punjab between India and Pakistan. Standing exactly there, he had told Mountbatten that he would not accept the truncated Pakistan: "It is here," Mountbatten added, that he had told him bluntly, "Mr. Jinnah, you asked for Pakistan and you will now have it. If Pakistan must have Muslim-majority areas, the Hindu-majority areas have a right to join India."

Edwina Mountbatten showed profound concern for the refugees in their camps and patients in the hospitals. Their daughter Pamela also used to take keen interest in social welfare and I had occasions to meet her as she was a patron of our society called "Caravan."

Lord Mountbatten had got full reports of how the district administration in Simla had stemmed the rising danger of communal violence in the Simla hills. He wrote me a very generous letter saying: ". . . history will pay you a great tribute for the strong line that you took with your own community to maintain law and order." While this was highly gratifying, coming from the Governor General of India, I also knew how scores of officers both in India and Pakistan had acted with similar probity and courage.

Lord Mountbatten was usually willing to agree to my requests to receive some important public man or to visit an institution during his stay in Simla. One of such visits was to the Bishop Cotton School. I was a director on the Board of the School, the other two being the Bishop of Lahore and the Governor of the Punjab. Lord Mountbatten spoke for about 25 minutes and humorously narrated several episodes of his political and naval career. Later, he moved around and talked to the staff and the students individually.

Many years later I met one student of those days in New Delhi, an eminent Pakistani diplomat, Dr. Humayun Khan, who was posted as Ambassador to India in 1986. In our first meeting in New Delhi, he referred to Lord Mountbatten's visit to the Bishop Cotton School in 1947 when he was a student there and mentioned how he had always carried the happy memory of that morning. Even in those days of nerve racking tension and raging violence in both parts of the Punjab, and when I was constantly worried about the safety of the Muslim students and the members of the Muslim community awaiting evacuation, he said, he had a very pleasant stay which was also academically rewarding.

Mahatma Gandhi's Assassination

On January 30, at about 5:30 p.m., a dozen of us were sitting in the Green Room Club on the Simla Mall. The radio, which was on, suddenly crackled with the stunning news: Mahatma Gandhi had been assassinated; he had been shot three times while walking up to the prayer meeting; the assailant was a Hindu named Godse. A shocked silence descended on the town of Simla as all the shops, restaurants and other public places downed their shutters. As if in a family mourning, the people of the entire town trudged to their homes in silence.

What a life it had been, snuffed out so suddenly by the assassin's bullet! Before our very eyes, he had performed the miracle of making the entire length and breadth of India accept the message of non-violence. Here was a meek and gentle person, walking bare except for the homespun loin-cloth, with no worldly wealth, no power or position of authority and holding out no promise to his followers except that of suffering and sacrifice. While mobilizing the national struggle for India's independence all over the country he strictly laid down the condition that all agitation and opposition to the British rule must be in the form of "non-violent non-cooperation." He opposed the British authority, but at the same time exhorted that there should be no hatred

against the British people and no resort to violent methods. He wanted people to show their courage and grit by suffering the police and army brutalities, by spending years in jail and by non-cooperating in every way, whatever the hardships. When in the thick of the non-cooperation movement, some people could not contain themselves and retaliated, and we in our youthfulness cheered their daring, Mahatma Gandhi would be profoundly hurt and would call off the movement, often just when it seemed to be achieving a resounding success. Howsoever noble the objective, he abjured hatred and violence: The means were even more important to him than the ends.

Mahatma Gandhi's reason for calling off the whole movement now and then used to be that people were still not ripe for non-violent non-cooperation which called for long suffering and heavy sacrifices with willingness to turn the other cheek rather than dealing a blow for a blow. This supremely ethical and spiritual attitude we the younger generation in schools and colleges did not easily understand yet he won over to his message the top leaders, the intellectuals, the business people, the middle classes and the illiterate masses of the country and carried on the hard struggle more than fifteen years on the principle of non-violence. They willingly suffered long-term imprisonment and put up with the humiliations by the police authorities. Amazingly thousands of top leaders like Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Morarji Desai, Maulana Azad and others, who spent several years in jail harboured no hatred against the British. Whenever they were released and negotiations started, they would discuss matters without rancour, basing themselves on principles and on India's birthright for independence.

The Mahatma's devotion to the cause of the untouchables stood out as a deep-rooted conviction. While being a devout Hindu, he found untouchability repugnant to reason and to the instincts of mercy, pity and love. He once said:

> I would rather be torn to pieces than disown my brothers of the suppressed classes. I do not want to be reborn, but if I have to be reborn, I should be an "untouchable" so that I can share their sorrows, sufferings and the affronts levelled at them.

After India's independence Mahatma Gandhi preferred to shift to a colony of the untouchables to share his life with them and to serve them. He once said that what would make him really happy in independent India would be when a Harijan woman became the President of India.

His was the mission of "wiping every tear from every eye." During the days of the "Great Calcutta Killings" in August 1946, he went to Calcutta to work for peace and friendship between the different religious communities, where he stayed among the untouchables of Calcutta. Suhrawardy, the Premier of Bengal, who had been mainly responsible for the communal violence of the "Direct Action Day," also joined him. The Mahatma would move around long hours of day and night pacifying the general public and appealing to every community to love and protect the members of the other community. In the face of the mounting disturbances and foreseeing the impending catastrophe, the Mahatma resolved to undertake a "fast unto death to end only if and when sanity returned to Calcutta." In an astounding gesture, the entire police force of North Calcutta undertook a twenty-four hour fast in sympathy while continuing on duty. Within four days, the rioting stopped and there was complete peace. After one of Gandhi's prayer meetings on the Calcutta maidan, thousands of Hindus and Muslims mingled and embraced one another. Truly, as Lord Mountbatten expressed it, he was "the one-man boundary force who kept the peace while a 50,000 strong force was swamped by riots."

In Delhi again, when communal frenzy was tearing the vitals of the city apart starting in October 1947, Mahatma Gandhi announced that he would observe fast unto death unless peace and communal unity were restored. He started his fast from January 13 and every day one heard bulletins about his failing physical health and obvious signs that he was sinking. The basic condition laid down by Mahatma Gandhi for breaking his fast was that all leaders would pledge that the rights and safety of the Muslims would be fully assured. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, president of the Congress, was able to get together the top leaders of all the communities and formed a peace committee. They solemnly pledged before Mahatma Gandhi to fulfil his conditions and to work immediately and wholeheartedly to bring about goodwill and unity between the different communities and to ensure safety of every Muslim in Delhi. He instilled into the hearts of all the leaders and prominent citizens in Delhi and, in fact, in the whole of India their duty to love and care for the Muslims. He repeatedly pressed home that the Muslims have as much right to be in India as any other citizen, in spite of the creation of Pakistan and it was the duty of every other community to assure them that all their political and religious rights and their safety would be fully guaranteed in India.

And finally the scene of the prayer meeting in New Delhi that evening would come again and again before my mind's eye. This frail saintly person stepping gently forward to address the prayer meeting

which would start with readings from the Gita, the Bible and the Koran. Just as he was a few steps from the platform and was blessing the crowd, a fanatic suddenly moved forward and shot him three times at point blank range. There one could see the Mahatma, the apostle of peace and "non-violence," dying soaked in blood by violence at the hands of someone who was blinded with hatred, vengeance and violence and could not reconcile himself to Hindu-Muslim brotherhood. Thus was Gandhi "murdered while blessing the people."

The reverberations of that shock reached even distant shores. Two instances of this remain etched on my mind. One is the sermon of Dr. John Haynes Homes at the Memorial Service in New York two days after Gandhi's assassination, in which he said:

> Gandhi's programme of non-violent resistance is unprecedented in the history of mankind. The principle itself "resist not evil and love your enemies," is nothing new. It is at least as ancient as the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth in the Sermon on the Mount. But Gandhi did what had never been done before. Up to his time, the practice of these non-resistant principles had been limited to single individuals, or to little groups of individuals. Gandhi worked out the discipline and the programme for the practising of this kind of principle by unnumbered masses of human beings. He worked out a programme, in other words, not merely for an individual or a small group of individuals, but for a whole nation and that, I say to you, is something new in the experience of man.

The second memory is the poem by the Brazilian poetess, Merels. She was having tea in a restaurant in Rio de Janeiro while outside the streets teamed with rollicking crowds amidst their annual carnival saturnalia, when she heard the news of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. Her poignant grief flowed in the following lines:

> Here the blue sirens stop and also the winged horses.
> Here I renounce the gay flowers of my inner dream.
> The newspapers are here unfolded in the wind, at every corner:
> "Murdered while blessing the people."
>
> O days of resistance, the spinning-wheel weaving in every home. ..
> O Vande Mataram, the small harmoniums, among silks of gold. . .
> The tea of Darjeeling, Milady, has the flavour of white roses. . .
> Streets, streets, streets, do you know who was killed there
> yonder on the other side of the world?

Dark untouchables of the whole earth: You do not even
know that you should cry!
"You, Tagore, you sing as the birds who are fed in the morning.
But there are hungry birds that have no voice."

And the evening wind fans the bitter headlines. Men read.
They read with the eyes of children spelling fables.
And walk along.
And we all walk along! And the most blind of all carries
a thorn between his soul and his sight. . .

Here too it is five o'clock. And I see your name among
thousands of cups
In the short smoke of the tea that nobody drinks.
"What did this man want?" "Why did this man come into the world?"
—"I am no more than the little earthen bowl fashioned
by the Divine Potter.
When He does not need me anymore, He shall let me fall."

He has let you fall. Abruptly, abruptly. . .

The evening wind comes and goes between India and Brazil,
and is not tired.
"Above all, my brothers, non-violence."
But all have their smoking guns in their pockets.
And you were, in truth, the only one without guns,
without pockets, without lies.
Unarmed to the veins, free from yesterday and the day
of tomorrow. . .

"Les hommes sont des brutes, madame."
The wind takes away your whole life, and the best part of mine.
Without flags, without uniforms. Nothing but soul, in a
crumbled world.

The women of India are bowed like bundles of sighs.
Your pyre is ablaze. The Ganges will take you far away.
Handful of dust which the waters will closely kiss,
And the sun take up from the waters, up to the infinite hands of God. . .

"Les hommes sont des brutes, madame."
What will you say to God, of the men that you have met?
A little goat, perhaps will awake tender souvenirs. . .

The wind blows the headlines; masks move about; men dance.
It is Carnival-time here now (and everywhere).
The voices of madness and the voices of lust stretch out vigorous bows.
The howling of the crowds echoes through the thousand levels
of cement.

Saints die noiselessly, blessing their murderers.
The last voice of concord returns to the silence of the sky.
The flowers of my tree are falling. I see a loneliness
come to embrace me.

Post-Partition Challenges

Staggering, indeed, were immediate challenges which the two Dominions of India and Pakistan had to face. Some eight million refugees needed to be rehabilitated in each country, and the disrupted economic structures and communication had to be reconstructed. The strain on their administrative setups to cope with the law and order problems and socio-economic tensions was tremendous. Then there were the questions like the division and movement of the civil services and the military forces, the allocation of the financial assets and liabilities from the pre-partition Government to the new Governments and the sharing of the military stores. They had to achieve a peaceful merger of about 560 princely States, some of whose rulers had ambitions of declaring independence while some others could provoke conflicting claims between India and Pakistan. The sharing of the waters of the rivers which flowed from India into Pakistan became another issue of grave concern to the new sovereign States.

Obviously, the tasks facing the new State of Pakistan were even more prodigious as the civil and military services had to be reorganized in its two wings separated by one thousand miles of Indian territory. West Pakistan, which was to be the heartland of Pakistan, had no local Muslim League leader who commanded respect in the whole of West Pakistan leave aside both in East and West Pakistan. It was the great Muslim League leaders from India, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan who had to provide leadership and inspiration to the new nation immediately after its birth.

Accession of the Kashmir State

It was the question of the accession of one princely State, Kashmir, which immediately after independence led to confrontation and conflict between the two Governments. With the transfer of power to India and

Pakistan, the British "paramountcy" over the princely states had lapsed and the princes had the option to work out satisfactory arrangements with the Governments of India and Pakistan and accede to one of them. In the earlier negotiations, the Congress party had favoured that it was the people of a state and not the ruler who should have a decisive say in the matter but that had not been acceptable to the Muslim League.

Immediately after the withdrawal of the British authority, the Maharaja of Kashmir remained vacillating about the accession of his state to India or Pakistan. The Indian Government showed no urgency and when the states' representatives were called by the Government to discuss the terms of accession, Kashmir was deliberately omitted. Finally, the Maharaja signed a standstill agreement with Pakistan so that he could have another year to make up his mind. This was accepted by both Governments.

There were two factors which probably influenced the Maharaja's thinking. First, although Kashmir adjoined both India and Pakistan and had a majority Muslim population, with a fairly large Hindu population in the state, he could not possibly join a Muslim State especially as he had seen the expulsion of all the Hindus from West Pakistan. Besides, it would have been galling for him as a Hindu monarch to be subservient to a Government whose basic ideology was Islamic. He maintained that, while Pakistan was a theocratic State, he had in Kashmir secular equality among all the religions. He had also to bear in mind that the National Conference, the largest political party in the state representing the Muslim and Hindu population of Kashmir and fighting for democratic rights against the Maharaja's autocratic rule, was secular in its outlook. The Maharaja could not show any leanings towards Pakistan which would have further intensified the agitation against his rule by the secular and democratic forces in the state.

Sheikh Abdullah, the leader of the National Conference, had expressed his preference for India and commitment to secularism when talking to the Muslim officers at the Grand Hotel in Simla in October 1947. The Congress party's attitude also had been of full sympathy for the struggle of the National Conference against the Maharaja's autocratic rule. In June 1946 for example, Nehru had gone to Kashmir to meet Sheikh Abdullah in jail, and to lend support to his cause. The Maharaja's Government did not allow Nehru to proceed to Srinagar and detained him in a rest-house. He had to return to New Delhi without being able to see the Maharaja or Sheikh Abdullah. Later, when Lord Mountbatten himself went to Srinagar to talk to the Maharaja on June 20, 1947, he also was not able to contact Sheikh

Abdullah in jail nor did he succeed in persuading the Maharaja to accede to one Dominion or the other before August 15.[2]

In any case, the decision of Nehru and his Cabinet was to let the Maharaja take his own time to decide about the accession of his state to one Dominion or the other, while insisting at the same time that Sheikh Abdullah, who represented the majority of the people of Kashmir must be released and must have a say in the matter. While communal violence was raging in both parts of the Punjab and millions were migrating between India and Pakistan, there was comparative communal peace in Kashmir. This was no doubt due to the secular propaganda of the leaders of the National Conference and above all that of Sheikh Abdullah and the equal respect for all religions shown by the Maharaja. With the Maharaja's standstill agreement, one did not expect any crisis in Kashmir, although Pakistan had started exerting economic pressures to secure accession. The release of Sheikh Abdullah also had a reassuring effect. Although the Kashmir Prime Minister had protested even earlier to the Pakistan Prime Minister about the armed infiltration from Pakistan, on October 24 came the startling news from Kashmir about the large-scale invasion of the state by tribesmen from the North-West Frontier in Pakistan. The invaders were coming mainly along the Kohala-Srinagar road through Pakistan and there were reports that some Muslim National Guards had also joined them from Rawalpindi. They travelled in a couple of hundred lorries and buses and obviously the Pakistan Government had full knowledge of all that.

During the next few days, more and more invaders entered the state from Pakistan through Muzaffarabad, a town in Kashmir state which they had captured.[3] As the raiders were proceeding towards Srinagar, they were committing acts of violence, looting and murder on the way. Faced with the imminent threat to the security of the state and to his personal safety, the Maharaja made frantic appeals to the Government of India to send the Indian army to save the situation. Appreciating the firm stand of the Indian Government, he asked Sheikh Abdullah to join the Kashmir Government and assume the administrative responsibilities along with his Prime Minister. With the raiders closing in towards Srinagar, the airport was deserted and the city was in a state of panic. The Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession to the Government of India and appealed along with Sheikh Abdullah, for immediate help from New Delhi. The accession of the state was accepted by the Government of India on October 26 and the Indian troops were dispatched to Srinagar the next day. There was heavy fighting between

[2]Campbell Johnson: *Mission with Mountbatten*, pp. 120-1.
[3]Ibid., p. 224.

the Indian forces and ever-increasing influx of the well-armed raiders. With the escalating conflict, the Pakistan Government decided to send its armed forces in strength into Kashmir to confront the Indian troops.

Just at this stage, Field Marshal Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief of the Indo-Pakistan forces, flew from Delhi to Lahore on the request of General Gracey, the Commander of the Pakistan army. The points Field Marshal Auchinleck stressed to Jinnah in the presence of General Gracey were: (a) the legal propriety of the accession, (b) India's right to send troops in response to the Maharaja's request, (c) the incalculable consequences of military violation of what was now territory of the Indian Union and, (d) the extreme weakness of the Pakistan army if the British officers were withdrawn as they would have to be from both sides.[4]

As it was by now quite obvious that the Pakistani authorities were encouraging and helping the raiders, Prime Minister Nehru wrote to the Pakistani Prime Minister on December 22 to stop such assistance and encouragement as that could only aggravate and prolong the conflict. In reply, the Pakistan Prime Minister stated: "As regards the charges of aid and assistance to the invaders, we emphatically repudiate them; on the contrary, the Pakistan Government has continued to do all in their power to discourage the tribal movement by all means short of war."[5]

When accepting the accession of the state of Kashmir, Lord Mountbatten had given an assurance on behalf of the Government of India that "as soon as the law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the raiders, the question of the state's accession should be settled by a reference to the people." To many it was puzzling why the Government of India had on its own suggested this when legally and constitutionally the act of accession had finally taken place and had even been endorsed by Sheikh Abdullah. In talks with the officials and political friends in New Delhi, I was led to believe that Prime Minister Nehru had been persuaded by Lord Mountbatten to agree to this commitment. In the following months, Nehru and his Cabinet colleagues often expressed their willingness to a plebiscite in Kashmir after the invaders were withdrawn. Howsoever honest the intentions, this assurance was to cause embarrassment to India for a long time and it was to provide a casus belli for Pakistan for the future.

In the following months, the war in Kashmir had created a highly

[4]H.V. Hodson: *The Great Divide—Britain, India and Pakistan Conflict in Kashmir*, p. 457.

[5]Government of India Records, also cited by Campbell Johnson, p. 227.

dangerous situation. From Indian reports, it appeared that training camps had been set up in the North-West Frontier Province and in the West Punjab from where a vast number of tribesmen, ex-servicemen and other recruits were being sent to fight in Kashmir. At this stage, the question was whether to attack the training and recruitment bases in Pakistan or to complain to the United Nations.

Lord Mountbatten had recommended reference to the United Nations but Nehru was at first totally opposed to the suggestion. Insisting that the first step was to drive out the raiders he said:

> We have not started the fighting. We have come into the picture to oppose a well-planned invasion and I do not see how we can submit to this kind of aggression.
>
> The present situation is that the frontier province and a considerable part of West Punjab had been turned into military training grounds from where vast number of tribesmen, ex-servicemen and others are being armed and trained and then sent on to invade Kashmir. The only inference can be that the invasion of Kashmir is not an accidental affair resulting from the fanaticism or exuberance of the tribesmen but a well-organized business with the backing of Pakistan.
>
> From the strictly legal and constitutional point of view, it is our right and duty to resist this invasion with all our forces. From the point of view of international law, we can in self-defence take any military measures to restore it including the sending of our armies across Pakistan territory to attack their bases near the Kashmir border. We have refrained from doing this because of our desire to avoid complications leading to open war. In our avoidance, we have increased our own peril and not brought peace any nearer.[6]

In the reference to the United Nations Security Council under Article 35 of the Charter, the Government of India had said that:

> If Pakistan does not immediately stop giving assistance to the raiders, which is an act of aggression against India, the Government of India may be compelled, in self-defence, to enter Pakistan's territory in order to take military action against the invaders.[7]

The Pakistan Government denied the charge of helping the raiders and levelled several accusations against India relating to various aspects

[6] H.V. Hodson: *The Great Divide—Britain, India and Pakistan*, p. 468.
[7] Security Council Records.

of Indo-Pak relations. The two resolutions passed by the Security Council till March 30 were not acceptable to either Government. Thus there remained a stalemate at the United Nations and fighting continued in Kashmir. The Pakistan Government had, however, admitted in the Security Council that some "independent tribesmen and persons from Pakistan" might have taken part in the conflict in Kashmir. Meanwhile, the three regular Frontier Force battalions were operating against the Indian army in Kashmir. The five-member United Nations Commission appointed in April 1948 also confirmed the presence of Pakistani troops in Kashmir.

3

From District Administration to Diplomacy

Rather suddenly, on April 15, 1948 I received a telegram from the External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi to the effect that, since I had been selected for the Indian Foreign Service, I was being posted to Ankara, Turkey, to open our Embassy there. I had to be in Ankara by May 1. This peremptory communication struck me as very odd. I could have been given at least a fortnight to deal with my pending executive and judicial obligations and to settle several family affairs before going abroad for what would be at least a couple of years' assignment. Besides, how could the Foreign Office think of dispatching a homespun District Commissioner to function in the highly sophisticated and fastidious diplomatic circles without briefing him fully for at least a fortnight in regard to the nature of the responsibilities in a diplomatic mission? Of particular importance was to educate a new diplomat about the requirements of protocol and personal behaviour which are quite different from the postures of a somewhat self-opinionated executive officer.

But the expectation of going to Turkey thrilled me. The historic city of Constantinople (now Istanbul) had been a melting pot of several civilizations, a seat of two great empires and had been in its days one of the great world capitals. It had world-famous architectural monuments of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires in the form of palaces, churches and mosques. Among these, I could recall the Palace of Constantine and the Church of Hagia Sophia. The stories of the inspired leadership which Kemal Ataturk had provided to the Turkish nation after the collapse of the Ottoman empire and in the face of the threats posed by the foreign intrigues and the invasion by the Greek forces had left an indelible impression on me. As the leader of the nationalist forces, he had firmly restored the independence and integrity of Turkey after grim battles and had given the Turkish nation a new sense of dignity and pride. In less than twenty years, he had transformed Turkey from the medieval to a modern nation. Turkey had been an example of the most

spectacular modernization of an Asian country. In place of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, Ataturk established the Turkish republic with its secularism, nationalism and etatism. The stories and essays of Khalida Adib Khanum, a famous woman writer of Turkey, I had often read in my college days in an Urdu magazine in Lahore. I used to be deeply moved by her patriotism, the sensitivity of her personality and the beauty of her language. I looked forward to meeting her in Istanbul.

The day after receiving the telegram from New Delhi, I went over to the Punjab Government offices on the other side of the hills and met the Home Minister and the Chief Secretary. They were both happy at the news as they had known of my keen interest to join the Indian Diplomatic Service. They advised me to leave for Delhi without delay arguing that the Foreign Ministry must have its reasons for this hurried move. To assure me, they issued orders that my Additional Deputy Commissioner would formally take over my responsibilities until my successor was appointed.

On April 22 I left for New Delhi for a week's briefing and consultations while my wife, Shamie, stayed behind for another five days to pack up the household goods, make storage arrangements for our moveable goods and settle other matters relating to our family property.

My briefing in the Ministry about the essential steps for opening of the first Embassy in Turkey and about the main objectives of my mission and the thrust of our diplomatic initiatives could not have been more brief and more superficial. The Service was still in the process of being organized and the people at the level of Additional Secretaries and Joint Secretaries who should have helped me had neither any diplomatic experience nor any background papers with them. Fortunately, at the highest level, we had two vastly experienced and internationally known persons, Sir Girja Shanker Bajpai and K.P.S. Menon, respectively the Secretary General and the Foreign Secretary of India. Menon had the heavy responsibility for the decisions for setting up Embassies in various countries, selection of Ambassadors, organization of the Foreign Service. Sir Girja was the Seniormost Adviser to the Prime Minister on day-to-day major issues involving our relations with the great powers where we had already set up our Embassies, with our close neighbours and the Asian nations and, above all, on important international issues. Menon received me for about half an hour and presented me to the Prime Minister for a few minutes. During the course of the conversation, Menon referred to the relentless pressure that was being exerted by the Stalinist regime against Turkey demanding some of its Eastern territories and naval and military bases in the Dardanelles. The declaration

of the Truman Doctrine a few months earlier had brought some relief to the Turks but the international situation in that part, he explained, was still critical. It was for that reason, he confided, that the Prime Minister wanted India's Embassy to start functioning immediately before "the pot boiled over." I was advised to meet the Turkish leaders and senior officials as well as foreign diplomats to keep the Ministry informed of the developments on the Turkish frontiers and the concerns of the Turkish people.

The Foreign Office did not even have any recent reports from Ankara where the British Embassy looked after our interests only in a general way. What caused me considerable physical suffering and embarrassment on arrival in Istanbul was that there were no country notes in the Foreign Office advising about the climatic conditions, the national customs and something about the protocol practices.

On April 29 at 3 p.m., Shamie and I boarded the Pan American plane at the Palam airport together with the three Secretaries who were to help in any work at the new Embassy. I had no diplomatic encumbrances, no diplomatic pouch, no boxes containing secret and confidential papers, and no clear guidelines about the functions of a diplomatic Mission.

New Delhi was extremely hot at the end of April with the day temperatures ranging between 100° and 110° Fahrenheit. I was wearing my white safari suit with white shoes which looked quite smart and *comme il faut* in New Delhi official circles but, as a precaution, Shamie had put a khaki coat and a necktie in the handbag. In regard to the climatic conditions in Turkey, the vague comments of an official who used to advise me in the Ministry were that "After all, it is part of the Middle East and it is likely to be quite warm there if not very hot these days."

This was our first aeroplane flight and after stoppages at Karachi and Damascus we were flying over Istanbul at 8 the next morning. Outside the window, it was snowing and the ground below was all white. As the plane landed, I hurriedly took out and put on my khaki coat and necktie. Walking down the steps, I shivered with the impact of the chill wind. We had hardly got down the plane when two gentlemen greeted us. The first was the Hon'ble John Wilson, son of Lord Moran, who was First Secretary at the British Embassy and had come to receive us on behalf of the Embassy. He was wearing a navy blue suit, had a black cashmere overcoat, a black hat and was well protected by a scarf, a pair of gloves and the usual English umbrella. The second gentleman was the protocol officer of the Turkish Government dressed equally formally and elegantly. While shivering, the newly arrived Indian

diplomat, who was District Commissioner until the other day, was painfully conscious how *mal à propos* and embarrassing was his outfit for that occasion—white shoes, white linen trousers and a light khaki coat. The two kind gentlemen took us to the Park Palas Hotel in Istanbul and took leave after making necessary arrangements for our stay and for our flight to Ankara the next morning.

Ankara was a beautiful city on the Anatolian plateau chosen as the new capital of Turkey by Ataturk in the heart of the country some 400 miles away from Istanbul. With its modern architecture, its wide boulevards with green trees and flowers along the embankments, and its public parks in this salubrious climate with their evening cultural programmes, Ankara symbolized the new Republic of Ataturk turning its back on Istanbul of the Ottoman empire with its authoritarianism, corruption, feudalism and foreign intrigues.

On arrival in Ankara, my secretaries and I started working overtime to rent and furnish buildings for the Chancery and houses, get all requirements for the offices, stationery, typewriters, morse code machine for daily news from India, Turkish interpreters to translate our daily publicity bulletins into Turkish and purchase of automobiles for our transport needs. What the newly arrived staff had achieved within a fortnight when the Chancery had started humming with activity was highly gratifying. Meanwhile, I had started making my official visits to the Foreign Office and courtesy calls on some of the Ambassadors and Turkish leaders. The first visit was on Sir David Kelly, a senior British Ambassador, who freely exchanged views with me on the Turkish personalities and the Turkish political situation. He and his officers were very helpful whenever approached and had also transferred to me a handful of files relating to India which contained nothing of any importance. By the end of the year, Sir David Kelly left as British Ambassador to Moscow where he wrote his very interesting memoirs, *The Ruling Few*.

Thus started my diplomatic career in Ankara on May 1, 1948. The following ten years were crammed with thrilling experiences. In Turkey, one witnessed the Soviet pressures—Ambassador Lavrichev was quite a hawk—the formation of NATO, the close military ties with America, the statesmanlike role of Ambassador Wardsworth and domestically the urge for democracy.

Next I moved to Germany where the administration of the city of Berlin and the position of the Berliners under military occupation provided unusual insights for any diplomat. Soon we saw the Russian blockade of Berlin with the threat of starving two million people into submission and paralysing the authority of the Western powers in West

Berlin. Then there was the miracle of the Western airlift—with transport aircraft loaded with food, coal and other supplies landing at West Berlin air fields at the rate of one aircraft every minute. The supplies airlifted amounted to more than 5,000 to 8,000 tons every day for nearly a year until the Soviets gave in and lifted the blockade. Not long thereafter, came about the division of Berlin and that of Germany, the formation of the West German Government and its establishing diplomatic relations as a sovereign nation after seven years.

From Germany I went to Portugal and spent two and a half years without being able to convince dictator Salazar that Portugal should follow the British example and peacefully withdraw the Portuguese colonialism from Goa, a small Portuguese enclave in India, thus opening up opportunities for close cooperation and friendship between India and Portugal. The discussions with Salazar and other leaders and the relations with some Portuguese families were some of my very memorable experiences. This was followed by three years in Pondicherry where, with the merger of the French possessions with India, I succeeded the French Governor. Next I went for two years to Cambodia in Indo-China and four years in Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

The exciting personal experiences and the talks with top leaders, intellectuals and journalists in these countries during this decade cannot form the subject of narration in these memoirs. The subject of these reminiscences being Indo-Pakistan relations, I must constantly remind myself to curb my penchant for digression.

Before reverting to the basic subject, I must, however, explain that in my description of the major developments between India and Pakistan during this decade, I do not pretend to have been an active participant or a close personal witness throughout. My narration of events and my assessments are based on the official dispatches, press reports, and talks with the leaders and the senior officials during my visits to New Delhi. Later as Secretary and Foreign Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, I was able to further confirm my records and assessments.

Further Developments in Indo-Pakistan Relations

When I left India at the end of April 1948, it was with a depressing feeling that the stage of Indo-Pakistan relations was extremely grim instead of improving after eight months of independence of the two States.

One serious crisis had fortunately been averted before Mahatma Gandhi's death, who rendered this last noble service to Indo-Pakistan rapprochement and goodwill. The crisis related to the sharing of pre-partition cash balances between India and Pakistan. As a result of the decision of the Arbitral Tribunal, Pakistan's share of these assets came to Rs. 750 million which India was to pay to her. Reacting against Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir, the Indian Government refused to transfer the amount to Pakistan. This high-handed attitude of the Government of India led to great resentment in Pakistan. The Pakistan Government rightly felt that other disputes were not relevant to India's honouring her earlier commitment. Mahatma Gandhi then undertook a fast for an indefinite period to bring about reunion of the hearts of the two peoples. As his physical condition deteriorated, the Government of India relented and agreed to transfer to Pakistan her dues.

At that stage, I had particularly in mind three urgent issues which could have led to grave tension and even open conflict. They were: the insecurity of the large minorities in both countries, the Kashmir dispute and the sharing of the canal waters. I shall deal with these three indomitable problems in some detail according as I saw the arduous efforts of the two Governments to resolve them over the years. Instead of describing the developments at different stages of my various diplomatic assignments, the full story is narrated in each case without interruptions.

Minority Problem

The tragic legacy of the communal holocausts of the partition days continued to affect the fate of the minorities in the two countries often leading to serious communal riots. In August and September 1947, the Prime Ministers of both India and Pakistan toured together in the areas where the riots were raging and made joint appeals for the protection of the minorities and safe transit of the refugees. They also warned of stern action against those indulging in acts of violence. In the highly charged atmosphere of widespread hatred and vengeance, however, the efforts of the two Governments had little impact in suppressing the orgy of looting and murder. It was only by early January 1948, when the wholesale migrations of the minorities from the East and West Punjab had ended, that there was some semblance of law and order in those turbulent parts.

The root cause of this problem of awesome magnitude lay in the basic ideology on which Pakistan was founded, namely, the "two nation" theory. According to this theory, the Muslims, though living in

various parts of India, were a "nation" apart. Islam conferred a different nationality on them—the Muslim nationality—and they must have a separate "homeland." Thus the Muslim-majority provinces constituted the new State of Pakistan which, however, did not at a stroke, resolve the problem of the large minorities left both in India and Pakistan. Nearly 40 million Muslims stayed behind in India and about 15 million Hindus still remained in Pakistan, almost entirely in East Bengal. What, according to the "two nation theory," was the nationality of these minorities? Would the 40 million Muslims, dispersed in different parts of India, be a different nation and aliens in India?

India's position was unambiguous on this point. While conceding Pakistan's right to form an independent sovereign State, India did not subscribe to the "two nation" theory that Hindus and Muslims were separate nations or that religion determined a person's nationality. Nehru had said: "India is not a communal State, but a democratic State in which every citizen has equal rights." Jinnah's own speech before the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in August 1947, cited earlier, also assured equal citizenship to everybody in Pakistan irrespective of their religion. These pronouncements should have given a sense of confidence and security to the minorities in both countries, but the bitter memories of the religious hatred and violence had generated too much distrust and suspicion to be wished away easily.

With continuous mass migration of the minorities and growing complaints of the persecution of the minorities in both countries, the Governments of India and Pakistan signed two Inter-Dominion Agreements in 1948 pledging to protect the lives and properties of the minorities and guaranteeing them equal rights as citizens of the country of their domicile. By the end of 1949, however, the situation within East and West Bengal became very grave with widespread communal riots and forced migrations, so much so that the two countries had moved their troops near to the borders and were on the brink of war. To calm matters and avert political conflict, the two Prime Ministers again made a determined effort through the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement of April 8, 1950 to assure the minorities in each country of complete equality of citizenship and full protection of their lives, property, culture and honour. The minorities on their part were required to pledge complete allegiance and loyalty to the State of their citizenship. Indicating how near an all-out war the two countries had reached, Nehru told the Indian Parliament two days after signing the treaty: "We have stopped ourselves at the edge of the precipice and turned our back on it."

Communal violence continued to erupt in India and East Pakistan at frequent intervals, often on a large scale, leading to forced migrations.

This constituted a constant source of tension between the two countries, their Governments exchanging virulent accusations and counter-accusations against each other. Another serious development, according to the official reports, was the influx of Muslim migrants from East Pakistan into Assam for economic reasons, and the Government of India's decision to deport them, which created resentment in Pakistan.

In the early 1960s, there were recurring cycles of communal violence in both countries. The horror stories of large-scale killings and abductions were a disgrace to the two administrations, which failed in spite of fervent appeals and firm commitments they made at the highest level. The exodus of the terror-stricken minorities from one country to the other posed recurrent problems of rehabilitation for the two Governments. The worst of these disturbances, almost comparable to what I had seen in the Punjab in 1947, was the communal violence in East and West Bengal in early 1964 with widespread looting, murder and arson.

This accursed factor of frequent and serious communal disturbances in both countries and the concern of each about its religious minority in the other country, undermined the growth of mutual confidence and good-neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan. The arrival of a large number of refugees from one country to the other further exacerbated the resentment among the general population. The legacy of the bitterness, mistrust and hatred that accompanied partition continued to dog the relations between the two countries.

Kashmir Dispute and the Consequences of India's Reference to the United Nations

Some background has already been given how the Kashmir dispute arose and of Indian efforts to persuade Pakistan to desist from encouraging and supporting the invaders. In reply to a protest telegram from the Government of India, Pakistan had refuted the Indian charges and had questioned the validity of accession of the Kashmir state to India. It blamed India for sending troops to Kashmir on the pretext of its accession to India. Lord Mountbatten's visit to Lahore on November 1 and his meeting with Jinnah, the Governor General of Pakistan, proved futile as also a letter of December 22, 1947, by Nehru to the Pakistani Prime Minister. On January 1, 1948, therefore, India referred the matter to the United Nations Security Council.

Nehru had strong reservations about approaching the Security Council, but Lord Mountbatten apparently prevailed upon him to do so. Nehru's contention had been that the invasion of Kashmir from

various parts of India, were a "nation" apart. Islam conferred a different nationality on them—the Muslim nationality—and they must have a separate "homeland." Thus the Muslim-majority provinces constituted the new State of Pakistan which, however, did not at a stroke, resolve the problem of the large minorities left both in India and Pakistan. Nearly 40 million Muslims stayed behind in India and about 15 million Hindus still remained in Pakistan, almost entirely in East Bengal. What, according to the "two nation theory," was the nationality of these minorities? Would the 40 million Muslims, dispersed in different parts of India, be a different nation and aliens in India?

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admitted, to the shock of all concerned, that Pakistan had actually sent three brigades of regular Pakistani troops to Kashmir in May. It was a "bombshell" for the Commission, as Corbell called it. The presence of Pakistani regular troops in the invasion of Kashmir had, indeed, been known earlier. For example, Lord Birdwood had noted in early March 1948, that a Pakistani battery of mountain guns with an infantry escort was in action in Kashmir.[2] India was henceforth even more firm in demanding that the Commission should make a declaration confirming Pakistan's aggression and insist upon its vacation of occupied territory.

During the following months the attitude of both parties hardened. They had both rejected the resolution of April 21. But the Commission persisted with its efforts. Finally, it put forward its resolution of August 13, in which it made very important and concrete proposals for cease-fire and eventually for a plebiscite to ascertain the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The resolution had three parts:

Part I provided for cease-fire;

Part II dealt with truce agreement and laid down that after all the Pakistani forces and the invaders had been withdrawn from the state, India would begin to withdraw the bulk of its forces in stages. India would, however, maintain such forces, in agreement with the Commission, as were considered necessary for the maintenance of law and order in the state; and

Part III laid down the procedure for the holding of a plebiscite after the first two parts had been implemented. Recording its opinion about Pakistan's violation of the international line, the Commission said:

> As the presence of troops of Pakistan in the territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir has been a material change in the situation since it was represented by the Government of Pakistan before the Security Council, the Government of Pakistan agrees to withdraw its troops from the State.[3]

Through his letter to the Commission, Prime Minister Nehru received further clarifications confirming:

a) that the Commission was not competent to recognize the sovereignty of the authority over the evacuated areas other than that of the Jammu and Kashmir Government;

[2]Lord Birdwood: *A Continent Decides*, pp. 62-68.

[3]Security Council Official Records—year 4—special supplement No. 4, pp. 21-23.

b) the time of the withdrawal of the bulk of Indian forces from the state and the strength of the Indian forces to be retained in the state were matters of settlement between the Commission and the Government of India; and
c) that as formulated in the Commission's proposals, Pakistan would have no right to have any part in the plebiscite.

The Government of India accepted the resolution even though it had some reservations in regard to a few aspects of the proposals. Pakistan, however, laid down a number of conditions before it could accept it, Among other things, it suggested that the Commission should also consult the Azad Kashmir Government which had apparently been set up by then in the Pakistan-occupied area. In fact, Pakistan maintained that even for cease-fire the approval of the Azad Kashmir Government would be necessary. Pakistan also insisted that Azad Kashmir forces could not be disbanded and made it clear that Pakistan would further train, arm and strengthen the so-called Azad Kashmir forces. These objections gave an indication of Pakistan's determination to retain sufficient forces in a part of the state and to have a say in any procedures relating to the plebiscite. It also made suggestions about some neutral forces to safeguard Azad Kashmir.[4] The Commission interpreted Pakistan's final reply as a rejection of those proposals.

After more exchanges and negotiations, the Commission made further recommendations, specifically laying down that after Part I and Part II of the resolution of August 13, 1948, had been implemented, a plebiscite would be held. A Plebiscite Administrator would be nominated by the UN and formally appointed by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Government of India conveyed its acceptance of the Commission's proposals on December 23 and the Government of Pakistan two days later. A cease-fire was established on January 1, 1949, and later, in July 1949, the cease-fire line was agreed upon between the two Governments.[5]

There were, nevertheless, serious apprehensions on both sides. Pakistan having occupied by force a third of the territory of the state of Kashmir would have been loath to withdraw its troops and hand this territory over to the state of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian forces to maintain law and order there. If Pakistan withdrew her forces as well as the invaders, there was little chance of her realizing the objective of

[4] Ibid., supplement 7.
[5] Ibid., Special Supplement No. 7, pp. 21-23.

securing the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The popular verdict, which had already been against Pakistan, would have been even more adverse after the harrowing invasion of the tribesmen supported by the Pakistan army. For India, withdrawing even the bulk of its forces posed the danger of riots and communal violence encouraged by the fanatical elements in the valley and supported by the infiltrators from Pakistan. Any religious riots would have had immediate repercussions in other parts of India.

Throughout 1949, the Commission tried hard to persuade the parties to withdraw their forces and create the necessary conditions for a plebiscite. According to Part II of the Commission's resolution of December 11, 1948, the first step was for Pakistan to withdraw the invaders and the Pakistani forces before India could be asked to withdraw the bulk of her forces. Pakistan by then had gone back on her position and wanted to be equated with India. India, on her part insisted on various conditions laid down by her since her complaint to the Security Council in January 1948. According to the Commission, the cardinal features of India's position were:

a) Accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India was legal and binding and must be taken into consideration in any proposal.
b) While India was in Kashmir as a matter of right, Pakistan had entered the state first through supporting the invasion by the tribesmen and later by sending her own troops. The verdict on this act of aggression must be passed and Pakistani troops and tribesmen must be withdrawn handing over the evacuated territories to the Government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
c) India which had gone to the United Nations with a complaint against Pakistan could not be equated with Pakistan and made to look like a "co-accused."
d) In considering the plebiscite, India must insist that the offer was to the people of Kashmir and not to Pakistan. Pakistan, therefore, could have no right to participate in the discussions on the plebiscite.

Pakistan's arguments were:

a) If Pakistan was to withdraw her forces, the Indian forces should also be withdrawn simultaneously.
b) Instead of handing over the evacuated territories to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, there should be some impartial

administration in which the Azad Kashmir Government should also have a say.

c) In any case, Pakistan would like to retain some troops in the state to ensure a fair plebiscite.

d) It also wanted to retain and strengthen Azad Kashmir forces for the security of the Muslims.

e) With a view to have fair plebiscite, Pakistan or at least the Azad Kashmir Government, must participate in the discussions relating to the procedure and its implementation.

The Commission's report on December 5, 1949, highlighted the enormous difficulties with which it was faced in implementing the resolution of December 11, 1948. It stated that:

Firstly, the Commission had not foreseen that Pakistan would use the greater part of 1949 to consolidate its position in the Azad territory.

Secondly, the Azad forces now had a strength which changed the military situation and made the withdrawal of Indian forces "a far more difficult matter."

Thirdly, neither side had complied with that clause of Part I of the resolution which prohibited increase in military strength.

Fourthly, "the situation in the state has changed, the resolution remains unchanged."

Fifthly, the position of the Northern Areas had changed considerably between August 1948 and January 1949.[6]

During 1949, I had been following the UN discussions and resolutions on Kashmir from Berlin where I was with the Indian Military Mission.

Not only was the cold war raging in Europe, it had started having its repercussions on the policies of the great powers towards the Afro-Asian countries. Soon, we found that the discussions on Kashmir were being subjected to Anglo-American considerations of cold war.

The Security Council appointed General McNaughton of Canada in December 1949 to mediate between India and Pakistan. In his anxiety to break the deadlock on demilitarization, he made several suggestions quite contrary to the historical facts of aggression already established and repudiating the definite assurances given to India by the UNCIP. India in reply, protested against the defiance of the UN resolution by Pakistan which had been creating obstacles for the plebiscite by sending further troops into Kashmir and by extending occupation to the

[6]Ibid., Supplement 7.

Northern Areas. Attention was also drawn to the building up of the Azad forces. McNaughton's proposals were severely criticized for ignoring the legal and moral aspects of the question and for his attempt to equate India with Pakistan.

The American and the British spokesmen supported the McNaughton proposals in spite of India's objections not only on legal and moral grounds but also for their knocking the bottom out of the understandings already given to the two Governments by the UNCIP. Nehru said that "this method of bringing pressure to bear for other reasons is something which the Government of India have not learnt to understand yet, nor should they ever learn it." In Kashmir state, the resentment of the leaders was the strongest. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad declared that "so long as a single Kashmiri is alive the McNaughton formula will not be accepted." Mirza Afzal Beg said that "India will lose the friendship of Kashmiris if she were to bow down before the pressure of the Anglo-American bloc and accept in any shape or form, the McNaughton formula which equated the aggressor and the aggressed."

Sir Owen Dixon of Australia was appointed the next mediator in April 1950, who also failed to find a solution acceptable to the two Governments. He suggested the partition of the Kashmir state with some procedure for allocating the valley instead of an overall plebiscite. He also stated in his report that the crossing of the hostile elements into Kashmir from the Pakistani side in 1947 and of the regular Pakistani forces in 1948 was "inconsistent with international law."[7]

In April 1951, Frank P. Graham of the United States was appointed as the new UN mediator. He recommended in 1953 that the best course might be for the two parties to hold direct negotiations.

Any future solution would have to be either by mutual accommodation and agreement between India and Pakistan or through an open war between these two countries. Any efforts, howsoever sincere, by the United Nations for a plebiscite were henceforth bound to prove futile. Hence, the only rational course for India and Pakistan was to have direct negotiations as recommended by Graham.

Direct Negotiations on Kashmir—First Phase

During 1953, there were three meetings between Prime Minister Nehru of India and Mohammed Ali Bogra of Pakistan in London (June 5), Karachi (July 25) and New Delhi (August 16).

The press statements of the two Prime Ministers after their meeting

[7]Security Council Official Records, Dixon Report Sept.-Dec. 1950.

in London were remarkably optimistic. According to Nehru, the discussions were guided more by a "friendly and cooperative" approach and not in a "legal, quibbling way." Mohammad Ali also expressed the view that the chances of agreement were "bright" in regard to all the disputes. He, however, expressed regret that Nehru had "thrown cold water" on his proposal for a joint defence policy between India and Pakistan. Explaining his objection, Nehru said that such an agreement must be based on a common foreign policy of the two countries; otherwise it could easily lead to India being involved in military pacts which would be contrary to her basic policy of non-alignment.

The popular welcome that Nehru was accorded when he visited Karachi for the second Prime Ministerial meeting was an eye opener. The jostling crowds on the roadsides and the rooftops all the way from the airport to the Government House, were ecstatically shouting slogans praising Nehru and celebrating Indo-Pakistan amity. Among the positive results of the meeting between the Prime Minsters were a good understanding on resolving the evacuees' properties issue and the agreement to exchange the enclaves in Cooch Behar. It was also agreed to reduce the restrictions on travel and trade between the two countries. On Kashmir, while the issue was discussed in all its aspects, it was agreed to hold further discussions in New Delhi.

The popular welcome that Mohammad Ali Bogra received in New Delhi was similar in spontaneity to the one Nehru had been accorded in Karachi. The communique from the Prime Ministerial meeting also struck an optimistic note and it was generally believed that the two Prime Ministers had agreed on procedures to resolve the Kashmir dispute by ascertaining the wishes of the people of Kashmir under the supervision of a Plebiscite Administrator. This would be preceded by setting up of committees of military and other experts to discuss the basic issues. The two Prime Ministers also deprecated any propaganda or attacks on one country by the other.

But within a matter of days, one started reading harsh propaganda against India in the Pakistani press. The ostensible reason for this was Prime Minister Nehru's statement to a representative of a Karachi newspaper, *Evening Star*, in which he had said: "I have put it to the Pakistani Prime Minister that the Plebiscite Administrator for Kashmir may be chosen from one of the small countries." This would have meant selecting another Plebiscite Administrator by the two Governments rather than Admiral Nimitz earlier designated by the Security Council, Nehru's argument being that the great powers were too entangled in their difficulties and often pulled against each other. He explained that for that reason it had bcome the normal practice to avoid

having representatives of these powers in any matter requiring some kind of neutral and impartial approach. He further clarified that he had meant no reflection on any power, much less on an eminent person like Admiral Nimitz. It was, according to him, "merely an appreciation of the facts of the present-day situation."

The Pakistani press termed this statement as India's attempt "to drive a wedge between USA and Pakistan," and accused India of trying to take the Kashmir dispute out of the jurisdiction of the United Nations.[8]

Nehru was the particular target of these attacks. I found it difficult to fully appreciate the sudden indignation of the Pakistani press when the decision of the two Prime Ministers for a Plebiscite Administrator from a smaller country had received wide publicity in India, Pakistan and abroad. For example, the *Pakistan Times* reported on August 20, 1953:

> The two Prime Ministers have agreed on the appointment of a Plebiscite Administrator in Kashmir, whose name is to be announced. . . APP [Associated Press of Pakistan] added: It is understood that the Administrator would not be the United Nations' choice of Admiral Nimitz, but would be chosen from some smaller country in Europe or Asia—possibly Burma.

The Times (London) wrote in its editorial of August 21, 1953: "He (the Administrator) is unlikely to be Admiral Nimitz—the United Nations selection, whom India has never much fancied He will more probably be an Asian, especially as the Burma Government, which both sides feel to be friendly has offered to give all help."

From the Indian side, the justification given for Nehru's statement was that the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan had agreed to this suggestion of having a neutral Plebiscite Administrator from a small country although they did not wish it to be recorded in the joint communique.

It could be assumed that the Pakistani leaders did not want publicity to be given to this implicit understanding realizing that every opportunity would be exploited by the anti-Indian elements in Pakistan to sabotage any moves promising Indo-Pakistan entente. If that were so it was most unfortunate that by a premature public statement from the Indian side, Prime Minister Mohammad Ali was put in a highly disconcerting position to face the attacks of the extremist elements in Pakistan who were, in any case, opposed to direct negotiations between the two Prime Ministers. To ward off further attacks against him, Mohammad Ali immediately wrote to Nehru, suggesting that instead of

[8] *Dawn*, August 27, 1953.

dropping Admiral Nimitz, the matter might be given further thought. Nehru in reply expressed his regret at the widespread campaign against India and against him, in particular, in the Pakistani press. He frankly reiterated the desirability of ensuring that the Kashmir question did not get entangled in big-power politics.

I was persuaded to believe that the two Prime Ministers had really made good progress towards solving the Kashmir dispute by direct negotiations. There would have been some preliminary discussions by the Special Committees to clarify the basic points and, later on, further progress could have been made through the mediatory efforts of a Plebiscite Administrator from a small country agreed to by both sides. It was also understood that there would be no outside forces in the state of Kashmir and the government exercising legal authority over the state would be the Government of Jammu and Kashmir at Srinagar. This was in line with the UNCIP resolutions of August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949.

Prime Minister Mohammad Ali made it clear in his letter to Nehru that he was faced with strong opposition and denied that there had been any agreement in Delhi regarding the replacement of Admiral Nimitz. He could, with some justification, say that the reports in the press about Admiral Nimitz were officially inspired in New Delhi. Whatever the implicit understanding, he was compelled to explain away to his Cabinet colleagues that the press statement from New Delhi was an attempt to force his hands. He also admitted in his letter that he was being subjected to accusations in his own country's press of having weakened Pakistan's case on Kashmir.

He had to reassure his people in a broadcast that there was no question of taking the Kashmir issue out of the Security Council, that he stood firmly by the Pakistani position in the matter and had only agreed to the appointment of a Plebiscite Administrator.

How could the appointment of a neutral Plebiscite Administrator from a small country jointly selected by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan have been prejudicial to the interests of Pakistan? How could transferring the case of the Kashmir dispute to the Security Council have helped its resolution when all the United Nations' efforts had proved futile during the past five years? Those vociferous political groups in Pakistan, who were opposed to Indo-Pakistan goodwill, cared little to answer these questions. Their aim all along had been to see that anti-Indian feelings were roused in Pakistan and that Pakistani leaders who tried to resolve the Kashmir dispute in a friendly spirit were discredited. With a view to heighten hostility between the two peoples and to create barriers against contacts and free communications

between the two peoples, the fires of the Kashmir dispute had to be stoked all the time.

In the context of the cold war, a climacteric development took place in South Asia at this stage which dealt a severe blow to the efforts for peace between the Governments. This was the decision of the American Government to give military assistance to Pakistan. Nehru termed this as bringing the cold war into South Asia, thus creating further difficulties in establishing peaceful relations between India and Pakistan. The Government of India apprehended that this military assistance to Pakistan would aggravate India's security problems. To exacerbate India's concerns, Prime Minister Mohammad Ali, perhaps not very wisely, made a statement to the *U.S. News and World Report* magazine on January 18, 1954, that "U.S. aid might help Pakistan in solving the Kashmir problem by augmenting her military power." Prime Minister Nehru said on March 1, 1954 that

> recently a new and more friendly atmosphere had been created between India and Pakistan through direct consultations and progress was being made towards solution of the problems. Unfortunately, by an extraneous factor, that progress has been checked and fresh difficulties have been created.[9]

The military aid being given by the U.S. to Pakistan, he said, was a form of intervention in these problems, which would have serious repercussions.

In consequence of the defence agreement between the United States and Pakistan, Nehru demanded the withdrawal of American personnel from the UN Observer Group in Kashmir as the U.S. had now become a party in Indo-Pakistan problems.

By the middle of 1954, it was clear that the direct negotiations had broken down. Apart from the Pakistani Prime Minister's difficulties with his own people in regard to a neutral Plebiscite Administrator, the argument that came to be stressed more forcefully by India at this stage was the impact of U.S. military aid to Pakistan.

Apart from their bilateral differences, the conflicting foreign policy perspectives of the two countries had started influencing their attitudes. While Pakistan had begun to rely more and more on Western support, India strongly believed that induction of American military equipment into Pakistan was a serious threat to her policy of non-alignment and to a peaceful solution of Indo-Pakistan problem. Nehru went to the extent

[9] India, Lok Sabha Debates, March 1, 1954.

of saying that with the military aid to Pakistan the solution of the Kashmir problem had been taken away from a peaceful approach for settlement to bringing the pressure of arms. He added that, since the presence of arms had taken the place of the previous peaceful and cooperative approach, India could take no risks and must be prepared to keep such forces and military equipment in the Kashmir state as was considered necessary in view of the new threat.

The negotiations had collapsed because, in spite of the good intentions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the satisfactory progress made in evolving the procedure for settlement, there were large sections in the Pakistani political circles who were totally opposed to a peaceful bilateral settlement. India's strong objection to the U.S. military assistance to Pakistan and her fears of its impact on Indo-Pakistan relations, was the second factor which vitiated the atmosphere for the negotiations.

Direct Negotiations—Second Phase

Suddenly, by the end of October 1954, hopes were revived of a brighter future for India-Pakistan relations, in the wake of far-reaching political changes that had recently taken place in Pakistan. The Constituent Assembly had been dissolved by the Governor General who had also asked the Prime Minister to reconstitute his Cabinet. It was already well known that the Governor General, Ghulam Mohammed, and Prime Minister Mohammad Ali believed in wise and courageous initiatives to break the Kashmir deadlock and in pursuing policies that promoted peace and cooperation between India and Pakistan. An important addition to the Cabinet was Dr. Khan Sahib, who was a well-known national leader during India's independence struggle. The two other important new members of the Cabinet were General Iskander Mirza as the Minister of Interior and General Ayub Khan as the Minister of Defence.

Both in the press and in the speeches of the leaders the tone was friendly towards India and hopes were expressed of resolving Indo-Pakistan disputes by friendly negotiations. It was in this atmosphere of goodwill that the Government of India invited Ghulam Mohammed to be the Guest of Honour on India's Republic Day in January 1955. The Governor General warmly responded to this invitation and came for this occasion along with his Prime Minister and two other senior Cabinet Ministers. The visit generated tremendous goodwill between the two peoples. Ghulam Mohammed, in his speeches during the visit, displayed realism and statesmanship which was warmly appreciated in

India. I had not heard any Pakistani leader for the past seven years making such passionate appeals for friendship between the two countries as he did.

For example, speaking to the students at the Jamia Millia in Delhi, he said: "The time has now arrived when we should learn to forget the bitterness of the past. I am convinced that Jawaharlal desires happy relations between our two countries. This is the desire of Pakistan also." Again, speaking at the State banquet in his honour, he said:

> I think this dark period of strain has now lasted too long and the time has now come to end it completely. . . Let us put an end to our disputes. We owe this as a duty to posterity not to leave them a legacy of misunderstandings and bitterness.

At the end of the visit it was agreed that the direct talks would be resumed between the two Prime Ministers to deal with the various problems. The talks began on May 14, 1955, when Prime Minister Mohammad Ali, accompanied by the Ministers of the Interior and Education arrived in New Delhi. As ill-luck would have it, just a day earlier, serious border fighting had taken place at Nekowal on the frontier resulting in serious casualties to the Indian army personnel. As it happens in such cases, each side blamed the other for launching the attack. Nevertheless, the Pakistan Prime Minister on his arrival in New Delhi expressed regrets of the Pakistan Government for the clashes and promised severe action against the Pakistan personnel if they were found guilty by the UN observers.

Despite this unhappy incident, the atmosphere of discussions was highly conciliatory and constructive. It was announced by both sides that on the border issue some satisfactory agreements had been reached in a "new approach." From the press reports it appeared that both the leaders had come to the conclusion that the old idea of plebiscite could no longer be implemented. The "new approach" was to find some solution by mutual accommodation keeping in view the positions firmly established by the two Governments on either side of the cease-fire line. The Indian press daily mentioned that both sides had come to the conclusion that the old UN approach would lead to another deadlock and that a plebiscite of the type conceived by the UN and under the conditions proposed by it was impossible of realization.

Even the foreign press reports indicated that Pakistan had decided not to persist in the old approach of plebiscite which could only mean deadlock for all time to come. For example, A.M. Rosenthal, the *New York Times* Special Correspondent, had written on May 19: "Both sides

made new suggestions gingerly and without publicity. Both Pakistan and India were talking about plans which would be variations of the status quo of a divided State and would not involve a plebiscite in the entire state."

All this was confirmed also by the statements of the leaders. Prime Minister Mohammad Ali stated that the methods that were being discussed were less rigid than before. He spoke of some "new ideas." Similarly, Prime Minister Nehru said on May 31: "The approach on both sides had not only been friendly but constructive and not the old dead-wall approach."[10]

Interestingly enough, Prime Minister Mohammad Ali was rather forthright in stating that ascertaining the wishes of the people of Kashmir could take other forms. He regretted that neither in India nor in Pakistan was there the American system of an electoral college. He also made some public remarks about "new ideas" and talked of a "referendum" or "elections" as being as good methods of ascertaining the wishes of the people as a plebiscite.

Mohammad Ali returned to Pakistan on May 19 to face blistering press attacks against his statements and decisions in New Delhi. It soon became obvious that he had not taken into account the hostile reactions of those fanatical sections of the Pakistan political structure, who were utterly opposed to a bilateral solution of the Kashmir dispute and to good relations with India. His view that there could be elections or referendum as a substitute for plebiscite was described as the betrayal of the cause of the Kashmiris. The critics demanded that there should be no more bilateral talks with the Indian Government. The newspaper *Dawn* went to the extent of saying editorially: "We have the right now to expect America to support us to the hilt on the Kashmir issue in the United Nations and also to use her good offices with her Western allies to lend us equal support."

Up against this wall of opposition, Mohammad Ali had to retract his views and give assurances contradicting his statements of a few days earlier. He said in his broadcast on June 1, 1955, that it was totally untrue that he had agreed to any other method of ascertaining the wishes of the people of Kashmir except through plebiscite.[11] He said a couple of days later that the Kashmir question had not been withdrawn from the United Nations.

Prime Minister Mohammad Ali's resiling on his earlier commitments was aptly summed up by the *Pakistan Times*, which wrote:

[10]Nehru's press conference, May 31, 1955.
[11]Dawn, June 2, 1955.

> Faced with criticism and asked to explain his utterances, Mr. Mohammad Ali began gradually to resile from his new position until, in his recent broadcast, he has returned to the Pakistani Government's original stand that an impartial plebiscite offers the only just solution of the Kashmir problem. Not only has Mr. Mohammad Ali sought to explain away his enigmatic remarks but he also seems to have changed his assessment of the Delhi talks. While he had returned from Delhi 'satisfied' with the results of his meeting with Pandit Nehru, Mr. Mohammad Ali Bogra now says that no satisfactory progress was made in Delhi.

The Governor General, Ghulam Mohammed, who had been giving a wise leadership for friendship between India and Pakistan had not been able to join in the negotiations as he had to go abroad for medical treatment. A couple of months later, he was replaced by General Iskander Mirza.

At this stage, I came to the conclusion that eventually this problem would have to be resolved by direct negotiations—whether it took two or twenty years. No outside agency can force a decision on the two Governments. The alternative would be resort to force but both countries would have to pay a heavy price for it without achieving any permanent settlement.

Pakistan Joins Western Sponsored Defence Pacts

Other developments in the years 1953-55 brought about a sharp cleavage in the foreign policy perspectives of India and Pakistan which were not only to vitiate their bilateral relations but were also to lead to their appearing as adversaries in all international forums. The U.S. offer of military aid to Pakistan in 1954 was the first signal of the new tilt in Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan welcomed these military supplies hoping to be able to negotiate with India from a position of strength and with some assurance of at least the moral support of the U.S. against India. To the U.S., in its search for allies against the growing threat of Communist expansion, Pakistan's willingness to have defence relationship with it was of particular satisfaction especially in the face of India's policy of non-alignment which the Secretary of State Dulles had termed as "immoral." Reference has already been made to Nehru's strong protest at this foreign intrusion into the affairs of the subcontinent and his concern that the American military aid would aggravate tensions between India and Pakistan. His apprehensions on this account seemed reasonable considering that the two armies were

pitted against each other along the cease-fire line in Kashmir and there were frequent border incidents on the other frontiers.

The U.S.-Pakistan military aid agreement was followed by Pakistan joining the South East Asian Treaty Organization in September 1954. A few months later, Pakistan signed the Pact of Mutual Cooperation in Baghdad with Iraq and Turkey—the United Kingdom joined soon thereafter—and thereby became a member of the Baghdad Military Pact which represented the "Northern Tier" strategy of the United States. The United States, even though she was not a signatory to the pact, had actually promoted it and had welcomed it by stating that it contained "the elements needed for an effective area of defence structure."

By joining the two defence pacts Pakistan's foreign policy had clearly opted for military alliances as against India's policy of strict non-alignment between the power blocs. This naturally led to a marked divergence of their perspectives on various international issues.

Pakistan now started further internationalizing the Kashmir issue by raising it during the meetings of these military alliances whether in the Council of SEATO or that of the Baghdad Pact. In each case, the assembled Ministers would support Pakistan and emphasize the need for an early settlement of the Kashmir question.

Improvement in Indo-Soviet Relations

At about the same time, positive developments started taking place in Indo-Soviet relations. Stalin had termed India as the lackey of the imperialists and had little faith in her policy of non-alignment. His attitude towards India could be judged from the fact that he never received the first Indian Ambassador, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, who was Jawaharlal Nehru's sister.

After Stalin's death there was a reappraisal by the new leadership of Soviet policy towards India. They could not but take note that the Indian democracy and Indian policy of non-alignment were generally appreciated in most countries, especially among the newly independent countries. They had, perhaps, come to the conclusion that, with the world denunciation of the Soviet expansionism abroad and their ruthless policies at home, it was important to win some friends among the Afro-Asian nations. By befriending India they could show to the West that they had the goodwill and friendship of a large country with democratic institutions and non-alignment policies. This, they hoped, would improve their international image.

India, on her part, had throughout tried to follow the policy of friendship towards all countries irrespective of the ideologies. Thus

India had happy relations with the United States and the People's Republic of China.

Nehru visited the Soviet Union in 1954 where he received a tumultuous welcome wherever he travelled in that country. Then came the return visit of Marshal Bulganin and Khrushchev at the end of 1955 to an equally enthusiastic reception in India. I saw this in Madras where to Governor, Sri Prakasa, had invited me to attend the reception in honour of the Soviet dignitaries. During this visit Khrushchev announced that the Soviet Union supported India's position on Kashmir. From then onwards, Kashmir, apart from the bilateral differences between India and Pakistan, became the object of superpower rivalry. Pakistan as a military ally was assured of Western support, especially that of America; and the Soviet leaders started supporting India in the United Nations.

The Decision of the Constituent Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir and Further Action by the Security Council

As early as 1950, Sheikh Abdullah, the Prime Minister of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, had announced that the people of the state would convene a Constituent Assembly to decide the future affiliation of the state. In its meetings held in November 1956, this Assembly adopted a resolution making the state an integral part of the Indian Union, and asserted that that was the final constitutional affiliation of the state with India according to the wishes of its people.

Pakistan raised the matter with the Security Council and strongly protested against this move. India's reply to the Security Council was that the Council had failed to settle the question of aggression by Pakistan and that India had given the promise of a plebiscite to the people of Kashmir and not to the Government of Pakistan. The plebiscite could have been held if Pakistan had complied with the first two parts of the UNCIP resolution of August 1948. Pakistan not having withdrawn her troops from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and, in fact, having augmented her forces and consolidated her position in Azad Kashmir and the Northern Areas there could be no possibility of India accepting the plebiscite. According to the Indian statement, the conditions for a plebiscite had undergone an irreversible change.

The Security Council passed a resolution on January 24, 1957, disapproving the resolution of the Constituent Assembly of the state and reaffirming that the future of Kashmir could be decided only by plebiscite. Another resolution, passed on February 14 which required demilitarization and a plebiscite in the presence of the United Nations'

representative, was vetoed by the Soviet member of the Security Council.[12]

By another resolution passed on February 21 the Council appointed Gunnar Jarring of Sweden to discuss with the Governments of India and Pakistan any proposal which could facilitate the implementation of the Security Council resolution. Jarring visited India and Pakistan in March-April 1957 but failed to resolve the differences. While noting the irreconcilable positions of India and Pakistan on various points, Jarring stated in his report to the Security Council that holding the plebiscite would lead to very grave consequences for the two countries. He concluded that the changes in the political, economic and strategic factors surrounding the whole of the Kashmir question, together with the changing pattern of the major powers' relations with Pakistan and India had created a situation in which a peaceful plebiscite could not be held.[13]

In 1958, when I was Ambassador to Stockholm, I had three occasions to meet Jarring during his visits from New York to his home town. He seemed to have come to the definite conclusion that any efforts at a plebiscite or to change the present situation in the state of Jammu and Kashmir would lead to war in which foreign powers would also get involved. He had in mind Pakistan's military alliance with the United States and the Soviet Union's support to India on the question of Kashmir. Without using the expression, he seemed to indicate that there could be no alternative to the stabilization of the situation at the present cease-fire line. Any effort to change it by one party or the other would lead to a major war which could also involve some outside powers.

The Security Council persisted in further efforts and deputed Frank P. Graham again to study the situation and discuss with the Governments of India and Pakistan. As could be expected, the Graham Mission failed to achieve any better results.

Sharing of the River Waters—The Canal Waters Dispute

As river waters were a basic resource for and powerful stimulant to the economic development both of India and Pakistan, the dispute over their sharing roused emotions and widespread bitterness, threatening a possible war. The problem was not simple enough to be resolved by reference to codified international law or legal principles.

12 Security Council Resolutions and Decisions 1957, pp. 1-2.
13 SCOR- Texts 3821 April-June 1957, p. 16.

The boundary line between the two countries cut across some rivers flowing from India to Pakistan. Could Pakistan demand full right as a lower riparian when the people of the East Punjab, who had lost vast irrigated lands and food-producing areas to the West Punjab, needed irrigation badly for the development of their own food production? At the same time, could India exercise her right to use all the waters flowing within her territory? This would have caused economic distress and starvation to millions of Pakistanis who had depended on these waters in the erstwhile united Punjab.

What would be the fate of some three million Indian agriculturist refugees who had over the generations cleared and developed agricultural lands in the canal colonies in the West Punjab and used to live in prosperity there? Forced to flee their homes before the juggernaut of partition massacres, they now waited, distitute, to be settled on some land in the East Punjab.

Pakistan had entirely to itself the waters of the river Indus, which flowed directly from the Himalayas into that country. Of the five rivers of the Punjab (the name itself means the land of five rivers), the Jhelum and the Chenab, too, entered Pakistan directly from the Himalayas. The Beas, the Ravi and the Sutlej, on the other hand flowed through India, the latter two joining the Indus in Pakistan.

The bone of contention were the Ravi and the Sutlej, which formed part of the boundary between India and Pakistan. The headworks of their canals were in the territory of India which claimed the right to use the waters for its immediate needs. But then, conceding that the West Punjab had ample river water resources, it would take several years to build new canals over hundreds of miles to replace some of the existing river irrigation systems.

Theoretically, India could argue that after partition 18 million acres were irrigated in Pakistan while only five million acres were irrigated in India. Even considering the total cultivable land dependent upon the Indus irrigation system, 40 million acres lay in India and 45 million in Pakistan. Again, for the sake of argument one could say that of the total 31 canals of the Indus basin system more than 26 fell in the Pakistan territory and only 4 plus 1 part canal were in the Indian territory.[14]

However formidable the Indian case, historically the canal irrigation map of the Punjab was drawn during the previous 60 years by the British Government and its engineers. Their aim was to provide river waters to the West Punjab to develop crown waste lands and procure additional water levies from the agriculturists. The properous canal

[14]Jyoti-Bhusan Das Gupta: *Indo-Pakistan Relations*, p.161.

colonies in the West Punjab, now in Pakistan, had been developed with the resources of the old undivided Punjab, and the Central Government, the manpower having been largely provided by the Sikhs who had now come to the East Punjab in straitened circumstances. Therefore, the East Punjab Government demanded substantial compensation to execute major irrigation plans.

To avert human disaster and the danger of war, short-term arrangements were needed to meet immediate difficulties as also sharing of water resources. But this could be done only if the two Governments were in a mood to negotiate and compromise. The Punjab Partition Committee, which had been set up to deal with all problems arising out of the partition of the Punjab, agreed on December 20, 1947, that the existing water supplies to the canals in West Pakistan should continue until March 31, 1948. At the expiry of this agreement, the canal near Lahore went dry as India started diverting river water for its hitherto unirrigated areas.

Further negotiations started on April 18 when the Pakistan side requested that the problem be taken away from the Punjab Partition Committee and submitted to the Dominion Governments. An Inter-Dominion Agreement was signed on May 4, 1948, to meet Pakistan's immediate requirements. It was stipulated, among other things, that Pakistan would develop in due course, alternative sources of water supply and India would continue to supply water to Pakistan as a temporary measure to save Pakistan from hardship. While India honoured its commitment, Pakistan took no steps to tap alternative sources of water supply, which in any case, required huge financial outlay over a long period of planning.

The Indian Government then proposed that a joint technical commission be established to study and suggest alternative sources of water supply to help Pakistan. Accordingly, the Inter-Dominion Conference of August 1949 appointed a preliminary negotiation committee which was also to appoint a joint technical commission.

At this stage, the Pakistan Government's attitude became quite uncompromising. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan announced that Pakistan would in no case accept any diminution of its share of water supplies from the Eastern rivers. He declared, in October 1950, that the 1948 agreement was not binding on Pakistan as it was compelled to accept it under duress. Bilateral conferences and exchanges of communications, instead of helping towards a solution only hardened the attitude of both Governments.

Mercifully, the solution to the deadlock came from a quarter distant from the subcontinent. David Lilienthal, former Chairman of the

Tennessee Valley Authority, visualized the devastating effect on the economic future of India with its vast population if no solution was found to the sharing of waters with Pakistan. In his view, this posed a challenge to Indian democracy and to the United States. Lilienthal was, like most Americans, acutely conscious of the recent communist domination of Eastern Europe and their drive to export the communist revolution to other countries. The establishment of a communist Government in China in October 1948, and the Chinese aggression in Korea in 1950 had further aroused the American fears of communist expansionism in poorer countries.

In Lilienthal's view, poverty posed a great challenge to India, the largest democracy in the world, which had stood firmly for democratic ideals as evidenced by its recently framed Constitution and by its political and socio-economic policies. On January 3, 1951, he wrote:

> India presents to the United States and to democracy an opportunity, such as we had and missed in China. . . . It is probably too late in China for us now. But it is not too late in India. The same conditions of impoverishment and need, the same high population; the same potential threat if this segment of humanity goes against us, or even worse, lines up with the communists.

Lilienthal seemed convinced that the Canal Water Dispute could seriously damage India's economy thus providing a breeding ground for communists in India. With his passionate interest in this matter, he had consultations with Dean Acheson, the U.S. Secretary of State, and with his approval he visited India and Pakistan in February 1951 to make an on-the-spot study of the Indus river basin. On his return to the United States, he published a couple of articles in the *Collier's* magazine, entitled "Another Korea in the Making." Lilienthal proposed that

> India and Pakistan work out a program jointly to develop and jointly operate the Indus basin river system, upon which both nations were dependent for irrigation waters. With new dams and irrigation canals, the Indus and its tributaries could be made to yield the additional water each country needed for increased food production.

He went on to suggest that the World Bank might use its good offices to bring the parties to such an agreement, and help in financing the Indus basin programme.[15]

[15]D.C. Gulati: *Indus Water Treaty.*

Lilienthal's suggestions evoked keen interest and positive response in American circles. Eugene R. Black, the president of the World Bank, appreciating the practical soundness of his proposals, went on to offer the World Bank's mediation to India and Pakistan in resolving the dispute, which was accepted.

In 1952, at Black's initiative, a working party of engineers from India, Pakistan and the Bank was set up to propose a practical solution. Although the working party did not succeed in working out a mutually acceptable plan on the basis of the quantitative division of waters between India and Pakistan, its discussions and the material it collected led the Bank to put forward its own proposals in February 1954 as a basis of settlement. Essentially, the proposal had three parts: (1) The water of the three "Eastern Rivers" (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) would be for the exclusive use of India, and the water of the three "Western Rivers" (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) would be for the exclusive use of Pakistan; (2) A system of "replacement" canals would be constructed to convey water from the Western Rivers into those areas in Pakistan which had hitherto depended for their irrigation supplies on waters from the eastern rivers; and (3) There would be a transition period while the necessary link canals in Pakistan were being constructed and during which India's increased withdrawals of the eastern river waters for its own use would be geared to Pakistan's ability to replace.

India accepted the proposal with minor reservations, but Pakistan demurred. The World Bank, however, succeeded in persuading the parties to consider its proposal as a basis, not of settlement, but of negotiations.

At the resumed negotiations, the Bank was represented by its vice-president, W.A.B. Illif, Pakistan by G. Mueen-ud-Din and India by N.D. Gulati. For almost three years, these representatives, each assisted by a supporting group of engineers, worked on the problem more or less continuously but failed to work out an agreed plan.

After meetings in Rome and London, the three representatives assembled again in Washington in December 1958. Meanwhile, with a view to promote an agreement, the Bank worked out a plan of large financial assistance from some aid-giving countries, as well as from its own resources to finance the construction of engineering works on the basis of the 1954 proposals. During their visit to India and Pakistan in May 1959, Black and Illif succeeded in securing agreement of the two Governments on the general basis of a settlement. In August-September 1959, the three representatives, with their supporting groups again met in London to work out the outlines of a treaty and later assembled in Washington in October 1959, when the draft of the treaty was finalised.

On September 19, 1960, the treaty was signed in Karachi by Nehru, Ayub and Illif and was duly ratified by the two Governments. On the exchange of documents of ratification in January 1961, it came into force retrospectively from April 1960.

Both in India and Pakistan there was immense joy at the resolution of this crucial problem which had been intractable since 1947. President Ayub Khan said:

> The signature of the Indus Water Treaty is an event of historic importance to the two countries concerned, and if I may say so in all humility, for the whole world. The solution of a problem of this magnitude, on the peaceful settlement of which depended the lives and livelihood of millions of people, has been achieved after very difficult negotiations which dragged on for over a decade . . . .

Illif said that the purpose of the treaty was to ensure the conditions for the peaceful and orderly development of the vast irrigation and hydro-electric potential of the great Indus system of rivers. Nehru, in his speech on this occasion said:

> This is, indeed, a unique occasion and a memorable day, memorable in many ways; memorable certainly in the fact that the very difficult and complicated problems which have troubled us, India and Pakistan, have been satisfactorily solved. . . . It is also memorable because it is an outstanding example of a cooperative endeavour between not only the two countries principally concerned but also other countries and notably the International Bank. . . . In particular, this is memorable because it will bring assurance of relief to a large number of people, farmers, agriculturists and others in Pakistan and in India. So I would like to express the hope that this will bring prosperity to a vast number of people on both sides and will increase goodwill and friendship between India and Pakistan.

In other parts of the world also, the signing of this treaty was welcomed as a great contribution to the peace and well-being of the peoples of South Asia.

Domestic Political Predicaments and Manipulations in Pakistan and their Consequences for Indo-Pak Relations

I had returned to India in 1953 after five years' stay abroad and was posted to Pondicherry, capital of the French possession in South India. I was eager to study more closely why there had not been better contacts, communications and some measure of cooperation between

the peoples of India and Pakistan. The memories of my stay in Berlin and the launching of the Schuman Plan in 1951 would often flash across my mind. Within six years of the catastrophic war, in which several millions had died and most European cities had been bombed disastrously, those West European neighbours had been able to quench their hostility and had taken a resolute step towards goodwill and cooperation.

Unlike the countries of Western Europe which had a long history of wars, the people of India and Pakistan had been one nation till 1947 and had much closer ethnic, cultural, and linguistic bonds and cherished memories of shared history. The two peoples had, within a few years of partition, overcome the bitter memories of the large-scale violence and exodus of the time. The existence of hundreds of thousands of divided families and historical and cultural monuments and religious shrines cherished by both peoples in each other's territory made the healing process easier. Meeting Pakistani friends abroad, I had been moved to see how, outside the subcontinent, the Punjabis and the Bengalis from both sides were happy to meet each other and how the United Provinces' migrants to Pakistan used to enjoy meeting their Urdu-speaking friends from India.

Even as early as 1949, in Ankara, while our two Embassies turned out weekly press releases harshly criticizing each other's Government on the Kashmir issue and in regard to the treatment of the minorities, the relations between the two Ambassadors were quite friendly, as both hailed from Lahore in the Punjab, now in Pakistan, and had known each other very well. I had warm regard for the Pakistani Ambassador, Bashir Ahmad, and always found him affable and considerate at various receptions. He had been editor of a very popular Urdu literary magazine, *Humayun*, which I used to read avidly for years before I left West Pakistan in July 1947.

What stood in the way of general rapprochement and some conciliation between India and Pakistan during the past eight or nine years? The history of Pakistan during those formative years provided some credible answers. Soon after the birth of Pakistan, several factors started militating against what should have been the normal process of detente and the pacification between the two Governments and their peoples.

Apart from the enormous administrative, economic and financial problems of the new State, the other immediate challenges which Pakistan had to face for its survival were those of "national identity and cohesiveness." What was to be the basic concept of Pakistani nationalism as there was no "Pakistani nation" before 1947 and how

were the leaders to arouse strong feelings of Pakistani nationalism? Pakistan was created on the concept of Islamic nationalism, yet 40 million Muslims were still in India and the 8 million Muslim migrants from India still carried tender memories of their ancestral homes. For hundreds of thousands of the divided families, the desire to visit each other had to be strong after, as they hoped, the two sovereign States overcame the initial distrust and resolved the immediate problems.

To emphatically project its new sovereign and independent status and to obliterate old memories of one Indian nation, "Islamic ideology" became the cornerstone of the Pakistan Government's policy and propaganda. India had to be publicized to the people of Pakistan as "Hindu India" with an alien culture, hostile to Pakistan and resolved to destroy the new State.

The grave concerns of the Pakistani leaders about the nation's internal cohesiveness and external security were understandable. The State had two regions, East Bengal and West Pakistan, separated by 1,000 miles of Indian territory with no direct links except through the long sea route. The ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences between the two wings were so marked that it called for rare qualities of political leadership to mould them together into one nation. No such leader appeared on the national scene after Jinnah's death.

In West Pakistan itself, there could be serious anxiety about the sense of national solidarity. Apart from the linguistic and cultural differences between the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Baluchis and the Pathans, the migrants from India had introduced a new element in the national life. Almost all the major towns of West Pakistan had been flooded after partition with 40 to 60 per cent population of the refugees from various parts of India, bringing in different cultural and linguistic traditions. The political, economic and social outlook of the middle-class urban-based refugees with strong Muslim League leanings was quite different from that of the indigenous West Pakistani feudal landlords with rural background who had had little sympathy for the Muslim League before partition.

I had seen for myself how Malik Khizar Hayat Khan and other highly respected Unionist leaders of the Punjab opposed Jinnah's two-nation theory and had stood for the unity of the country. After Pakistan was established, the refugee leaders from India came to dominate the political authority in the new State treating with disrespect, if not disdain, the erstwhile popular and proud leadership of the Punjab, Sindh and North-West Frontier. Even the Muslim League, the national political party, at this stage, was controlled by the urban middle-class refugees. Its president was Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman, a refugee from

India, and so were most members of the Working Committee. In the prevailing situation in West Pakistan, the propaganda of Islamic ideology and about India's hostility came in handy for the Pakistani leaders to silence any internal differences and dissent.

Anti-Indianism continued to be used as an integrating factor for the people of Pakistan. The war in Kashmir provided them further ammunition. Whatever we in India may have thought of our peaceful intention, Pakistani leaders and the people could not forget that the State of Pakistan had materialized amidst widespread violence and bitterness in the two countries. India's political stability, coupled with her economic and military strength could also have aggravated Pakistani fears.

Some Indian leaders were very critical of Nehru for not getting the Pakistani aggression vacated by force when India's military strength after partition was more than eight times that of Pakistan and when the Pakistan army's participation in the invasion had been clearly established. Nehru did not believe in war with Pakistan and instead offered a "No War Pact" in 1949. This would have allayed Pakistani anxieties if her leaders had genuine fears of an Indian threat to her security. The fact that the Pakistan Government rejected the offer would confirm that the propaganda about India's aggressive designs had to be constantly fanned for domestic reasons.

It was generally believed by objective observers that throughout Pakistan's early history, her leaders badly needed the bogey of an ever-present Indian threat with a view to consolidate their authoritarian regime, to bar contacts and communications between millions of people having friends and relations across the borders and to suppress any demands by the East Pakistanis for a greater share in economic decisions and political power. In the name of national security, all democratic urges needed to be stamped out.

The other adverse factor, apart from their conflicting national ideologies, namely a secular State vis-a-vis an Islamic State, which marred the development of good relations between the two countries, was the contradiction in their political systems. While India established a federal democratic constitution with elected Assemblies and Governments in the states and at the Centre, the Pakistani regime became more and more authoritarian with the passage of years without any active participation of the people of Pakistan.

I was convinced that if Pakistan also had democratic institutions with the leaders representing the longings of their people, its relations with India would have considerably improved because Pakistani people, in general, would have liked to see good relations and

cooperation with India. They would have repudiated the constant anti-Indian propaganda.

Unsuccessful Efforts to Frame a Democratic Constitution for Pakistan

One often wondered why the hopes of parliamentary democracy could not be realized in Pakistan when its people, like those in India, had been introduced by the British to democratic institutions like municipal councils, District Boards and State Assemblies. Even though the franchise was limited, the practice of democratic elections and representative governments had been developed for at least ten years before the birth of Pakistan.

Reference has been made to the sharp ethnic and cultural differences in the two regions of Pakistan and in the four provinces of West Pakistan. But the situation in India was no less multi-faceted. One could point out to much more pronounced differences, ethnic, linguistic and cultural, between the states of India, such as West Bengal in the East, Madras, Hyderabad, Mysore and Kerala in the South, Maharashtra and Gujarat in the West and the Punjab and the United Provinces in the North. Why did these ethnic and cultural contrasts in India not come in the way of national integration and common endeavours for a federal structure of democratic politics?

The reason obviously was that, in the three decades of India's independence struggle, the Congress party had brought about a political awakening not only in the main cities and the towns but also in the remote rural areas. Men and women in all parts of the country fought side by side for India's independence. The people were thus made conscious of their right to national independence, human freedom and equality.

In Pakistan, on the other hand, there had been total lack of awakening of the masses to their urges for political participation and for economic and social justice. Unlike India, where the struggle for independence had spread even to distant villages, in Pakistan there was no politicization of the masses. The propaganda and the appeal for Pakistan was restricted to the towns and even there the reaction was limited to emotional longing for a Muslim State. This was particularly true in West Pakistan where the leaders were feudal landlords and the political parties had little contact with the masses. Thus, when Pakistan was achieved, there was little discussion or debate even among the leaders, the middle class and the intelligentsia regarding the future political institutions and the economic planning of the new State.

Unlike Pakistan, India had the good fortune to have more than 200 top leaders representing every state of India who had won the respect of the nation by their struggle for independence, going to jail for years and by constant contact with the masses. The Muslim League was opposed to active struggle for independence. In fact, they were on good terms with the British who used the Muslim League as a counterpoise to the Congress. Pakistan was achieved not with the sacrifices of the Muslim leaders: not one of them ever faced the police assaults or went to jail.

Above all, it was Jinnah's great leadership which had made Pakistan a reality. In negotiations with the Congress and the British, he succeeded in his unflinching demand for Pakistan—a separate State with Muslim-majority provinces as its constituents. He was also able to arouse successfully the fears and the hopes of the Muslims, which was necessary for the attainment of Pakistan. One hardly heard the names of other leaders, not even half a dozen of them of national stature. It was thus a serious handicap that Pakistan in its early years did not have many leaders respected by the nation and known for their sacrifices and their service to the masses and for their record of commitment to democratic ideals. Only the names of Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan were well known and both of them had migrated from India, one from Bombay and the other from U.P. and it was they whose leadership laid the foundations of the new State of Pakistan.

All these circumstances made the task of Constitution making quite intractable. Instead of framing a Constitution that gave expression to the democratic urges of the people and granted them the fundamental rights and representative institutions, the debates in the Constituent Assembly were marked by rivalries between the political leaders and differences between the two wings of Pakistan.

When the Constituent Assembly met in 1949, it found irreconcilable differences among the members on several issues with the result that the discussions could make no headway. There was no unanimity even on the Basic Principles. The members from East Pakistan demanded higher representation in the federal legislature on the basis of their larger population, which was not acceptable to the members from West Pakistan. The East Pakistani members were not prepared to accept Urdu as the national language which was spoken by 5 per cent of the people of Pakistan. To them the Bengali language, which was spoken by 60 per cent of the Pakistanis, mainly the people of East Pakistan, deserved an equal status. The members of the Assembly were also split on the question whether Pakistan should be an Islamic State or a secular State.

Without making any progress in framing the Constitution, the Constituent Assembly was dissolved after five years of futile debates.

The next Constituent Assembly was elected in 1955 not through general elections but by State Assemblies. It succeeded in framing a Constitution in 1956 declaring Pakistan as an Islamic Republic and according parity between East and West Pakistan representatives. One of the provisions was that only a Muslim could be the Head of State. The question of the national language, which had provoked a great deal of controversy, was deferred. It is particularly pertinent to mention that the usual democratic conventions were not spelt out nor was there a provision for the fundamental rights of the citizens.

Without any elections having been held under the new Constitution, it was abrogated in 1958 when General Mohammed Ayub Khan assumed dictatorial powers through a military coup. This brought down the curtain on Pakistan's efforts to have a democratic Constitution and representative government to administer the country according to the needs and aspirations of the people of Pakistan.

In the absence of a Constitution, the political authority was taken over by the Punjabi leaders and civil servants after Jinnah's death and Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination. The new leadership became more and more autocratic and dependent upon the military support which was readily forthcoming as more than 80 per cent of the national army was from the Punjab. Ghulam Mohammed, who succeeded Liaquat Ali Khan as Governor General, was not a political leader but had risen from the position of a civil servant to become the Finance Minister and finally the Governor General from 1951 to 1955. General Iskander Mirza, who was at one time the Defence Secretary, became the Minister of the Interior and ended up as the President. Similarly, Chaudhary Mohammed Ali, another Punjabi civil servant, became the Prime Minister. These political developments pointed out that democracy was being snuffed out and an authoritarian system controlled by the Punjabi civil servants and supported by the Punjabi army was being established. The military-bureaucratic set-up occupied high offices and manipulated power without any responsibility to the elected representatives of the people.

In 1954, under Governor General Ghulam Mohammed's directions, two generals were inducted in Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Bogra's Cabinet. They were General Iskander Mirza as Minister of the Interior and General Mohammed Ayub Khan as Minister of Defence. From then onwards, along with the civil service, the military started playing a dominant role in the domestic and foreign policies of Pakistan.

The Punjabi rulers gave a crushing blow to democracy in East Pakistan where the United Democratic Front had won the provincial elections in the first week of March 1954, routing the Muslim League.

This party, which had been responsible for the birth of Pakistan, won 10 seats for the State Assembly in East Pakistan as against 237 won by the United Democratic Front. This democratically elected Government with Fazlul Haq as the Chief Minister demanded more democratic rights for the people and greater degree of provincial autonomy for East Pakistan. The dictatorial rulers of West Pakistan found these demands totally unacceptable. The Government was dismissed by the Governor General and Governor's rule was imposed in East Pakistan which further reinforced the autocratic military rule.

This stern repression of the democratic urges of the East Pakistanis was in accordance with the arrogant and authoritarian attitude of the West Pakistani rulers towards East Pakistanis. The latter had hardly any say in the political decision-making or in the civil administration. In the defence services, East Pakistan with 60 per cent of the national population, did not have even one per cent personnel in the army, navy or air force. Ninety per cent of the Defence Services were Punjabis who supported a dictatorial regime over the country. This contemptuous treatment by the West Pakistan leaders of the people of East Pakistan with the majority population and with entirely different ethnic, cultural and linguistic background, was bound to undermine national integrity.

The unstable political situation in Pakistan could be judged from the fact that there were five Prime Ministers between 1953 and 1958 when General Iskander Mirza imposed martial law and dismissed the Prime Minister. Within a few months General Ayub Khan forced General Iskander Mirza to resign and seek refuge outside Pakistan. General Ayub started his dictatorship by abrogating the Constitution and by banning political parties.

4

The India-China Border War of 1962

In 1962 I was Ambassador in Stockholm when I received the Government's instructions to proceed to London as Deputy High Commissioner. As I reached London at the end of September 1962, the dispatches from India indicated frequent Chinese intrusions in the northern frontiers of India resulting in several border clashes. The crossing of the Thagla ridge by the Chinese troops on September 8 had made it quite clear that China had given up any pretence of bilateral negotiations and had decided to change the boundary by military thrusts—Chou En-lai having already claimed some 40,000 square miles of Indian territory in his letter of September 8, 1959, to Nehru.

The border dispute had a long history behind it, although during the early years after India's independence and the establishment of the People's Republic of China, there had been no mention of any territorial claims by the Chinese leaders.

India's policy in those years was to avoid any criticism of the People's Republic of China and to display maximum understanding and support for it. Thus, at the time of the military occupation of Tibet by the Chinese in 1950 leading to the obliteration of Tibetan autonomy, India refrained from any strong denunciation, although the assurances given to India by China had not been honoured. Later, India took upon herself to consistently support China's cause in the Korean War and unequivocally stood for her admission to the United Nations.

Even when the two countries signed the Trade and Intercourse Agreement in April 1954, China did not make any claim on Indian territories along the Sino-Indian border. If China wanted to be honest, this was the appropriate occasion to raise the boundary question as India had accepted Tibet as a region of China and had given up her historical, commercial and communication rights there. The agreement also specifically mentioned six passes on the Indo-Tibetan border for trade and transit between India and China. Chinese reservations about

the boundary, if any, should have been stated at that time which they failed to discuss even in response to India's suggestion.[1] As a matter of fact, Chou En-lai himself had made a categorical statement in 1954 to the effect that "there was no territorial dispute or controversy between India and China."[2]

What was considered by India to be of great importance in this agreement were the provisions in its preamble, which were later called "Panchsheel," meaning five principles of peaceful coexistence, understanding and cooperation. Expressing India's happiness over this agreement Nehru said in a broadcast from Colombo on May 2, 1954: "this agreement (April 29, 1954) not only settles outstanding points between the two countries—India and China—and establishes their relationship formally on a peaceful basis. It is from this larger benefit that I have welcomed this agreement." Krishna Menon also said in the U.N. General Assembly on October 6, 1954: "We believe that by the understanding reached through this agreement, our two countries have made a great contribution to peace in the Asian world."[3]

In those years, we had noticed some Chinese maps showing parts of Indian territories in China, but the reply given by the Chinese Premier was that they were old maps prepared by the Kuomintang regime and the People's Republic of China had not had the opportunity to revise them.[4] Some border incidents had also taken place as early as 1954, 1955 and 1956 but without the Chinese questioning their existing boundary with India. In fact, during his visit in November 1956, Chou En-lai referred to the McMahon Line "as an accomplished fact" thereby recognizing it as the boundary line between India, China and Burma.[5]

The first major shock was the announcement by the Chinese Government in September 1957, that it had completed its Aksaichin Road linking Yarkand and Khotang in Sinkiang with Tibet. This road passed for 100 miles through Ladakh which belonged to the Indian part of Kashmir. The building up of this strategic road through Indian territory gave a clearer warning to India that China was bent upon occupying additional Indian territories clandestinely and, if necessary,

[1]*Times of India*, May 1, 1954.

[2]Nehru's speech in the Lok Sabha on November 25, 1959. See Ministry of External Affairs: *Prime Minister Nehru on Sino-Indian Relations*, New Delhi 1961, vol. I, p. 184. Quoted in Ram Naresh Trivedi's *Sino-Indian Border Dispute*.

[3]General Assembly UN Records, October 6, 1954.

[4]Quoted by Ram Naresh Trivedi: *Sino-Indian Border Dispute*, p. 11.

[5]White Paper, I, Prime Minister Nehru's letter to Chou En-lai dated January 14, 1958.

even openly.

In January 1959, Chou En-lai formally informed the Indian Prime Minister that the McMahon Line was not acceptable as a boundary line between India and China and that there had been no formal delimitation of the Sino-Indian border. As to why this border dispute had not been raised in 1954, Chou En-lai's excuse was that "conditions were not yet ripe for its settlement and the Chinese side on its part had had no time to study the question."[6]

The Tibetan rebellion and India granting asylum to the Dalai Lama and a large number of Tibetan refugees in March 1959, had further embittered Sino-Indian relations.

Since then there had been frequent clashes on the borders with the Chinese troops amassing on the Indian frontier at various places and capturing some Indian posts. It then dawned upon India that China had been in the past years building strategic roads and military posts for claiming vast areas of Indian territory. As already stated, it was on September 8, 1959, that Chou En-lai in a letter to Nehru put forward, for the first time, Chinese claims to a large chunk of Indian territory (nearly 40,000 square miles) and accused India of trying to change the Sino-Indian border unilaterally.

In February 1960, Chou En-lai visited India at Nehru's invitation but during the discussions no progress could be made in finding some solution to the irreconcilable positions on the whole boundary question. Chou En-lai having already declared that the traditional boundary and the McMahon Line was not acceptable to China, there was little chance of a compromise by adjustments of small areas. In the next meeting between the two Prime Ministers in the third week of April 1960 at New Delhi, Chou En-lai offered to accept the McMahon Line as boundary in the Eastern Sector provided India was willing to pay the price by accepting the Chinese occupation of Ladakh. This was totally unacceptable to India.

Further meetings took place between the officials of the two Governments during 1960 and 1961 without any progress, while the Chinese intrusions continued unabated.

In the middle of July 1962, Chinese troops launched an attack in the Galwan Valley, which was repulsed. India had suggested further discussions for a peaceful settlement but the Chinese side rejected this offer. From then onwards all dispatches from India indicated growing tension and border skimishes. Finally, on September 8, 1962, the

6Chou En-lai's letter of January 23, 1959 to Prime Minister Nehru, White Paper No. I, pp. 52-54.

Chinese launched a major attack and crossed the Thagla ridge.

U.S. and British Sympathy and Support for India

On October 20, we got the news in London of a full-scale offensive by the Chinese troops along the North-East frontier starting with Chinese artillery attacks on Indian positions South of the McMahon Line. While the Chinese invasion had been thoroughly planned over a long period, India had failed to make adequate defensive arrangements and the Indian defence forces were forced to withdraw.

There was a strong reaction in the British press and the political circles at the Chinese aggression and expressions of widespread sympathy and support for India.

On October 25, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan announced in the House of Commons that the British Government was prepared to provide India with military assistance in her defence against China. Within four days British planes carrying automatic guns and other small arms and ammunition had arrived in India.

In the discussions with the British leaders and the top press representatives, I felt greatly heartened by their strong indignation against the Chinese aggression and their sincere support for India. Within a few days of the Chinese invasion, some members of the British Labour party asked me to address them in a Committee Room of the House of Commons when Harold Wilson, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, presided. I gave them the historical background of the boundary between India and China and the developments during the past fifteen years underlining the efforts Nehru had made to befriend and support China and to base our relations with them on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Reference was also made to the deception China had exercised for the past twelve years while preparing for her aggressive designs. I could see unanimous feeling among the members present to lend support to India's war effort. It was on this occasion that Harold Wilson stated that "our frontiers are on the Himalayas," which meant that Britain would solidly stand by India in her fight against the Chinese aggression.

On October 30, the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, again declared in the House of Commons that Britain would give India any aid at her request for her defence against Communist China's "brutal and ruthless pressure." The same day, Queen Elizabeth II said in the House of Commons that Britain had been "shocked" by the invasion of Indian territory and that Britain "fully supports India's decision to defend her rightful frontier."

In the British policy decision to come to India's succour in her moment of despair, the warm friendship of Lord Mountbatten, who was the Chief of Defence Staff, was a valuable asset, as I could gather during my frequent meetings with him. He was gracious enough to ask me and my wife several times for small parties at his residence "Broadlands" and always spoke of his last days in India and of his personal relations with Nehru with very warm feelings.

Since we had known each other in Simla, he was invariably informal and extended utmost courtesy to me. So much so, as described later, he once insisted, in spite of my protests, to come personally to see me at the High Commission for a discussion.

On a couple of occasions, I broached with him two questions about the time of the partition of India which had always vexed me. One of them was why he advanced the date of independence of India by one year as against the original date of June 1948 proposed by the British Government. Would not an extra year have given him the time to plan more thorough arrangements for smooth and peaceful transfer of power to the two Dominions instead of the large-scale communal carnage and the civil war which preceded and accompanied the partition?

Mountbatten's assessment was that when he reached India, the situation had already reached the point of no return. With the confrontation within the Interim Government, there was no central authority and the religious disturbances were taking place all over India, especially in the Punjab on a massive scale. He was strongly advised by those who had a thorough grasp of the situation including my senior ICS colleague, George Abell, that it was impossible for the Central Government to stop the prevailing widespread butchery in the Punjab in which the police and the civil services were deeply involved. The same was the advice of Lord Ismay and the Punjab Governor, Sir Evan Jenkins.

In those circumstances Mountbatten had felt that with partition, which had been accepted both by the Congress and the Muslim League, the burden of responsibility for law and order must be placed immediately on the leaders of India and Pakistan. Could he not, I asked, have delayed actual transfer of power at least by some months by maintaining a strong Centre with the united army in full command till the two Dominion Governments had established firm control over their new administrations and some harmonious relations had been established between them?

Mountbatten explained that he had even hoped that the army would be kept united for an extra year with the British Supreme Commander at its head. This could have hopefully ensured peaceful implementation

of the partition plans. Not only that, he had even suggested that he could continue for some time as Common Governor General for both the Dominions to help in settling amicably any controversies that might arise in the early stages. Jinnah, he explained, was totally opposed to these suggestions. He wanted sovereign Pakistan to have her own army immediately and he wanted himself to be the Governor General of Pakistan without any other constitutional authority over him.

Reverting to the 1962 war, from the reports from India, it was well known that the U.S. was also responding very positively and promptly to India's defence requirements in the face of the imminent threat. Happily the U.S. Ambassador in New Delhi at the time, who was an eminent professor, John Kenneth Galbraith, displayed remarkable perspicacity, sympathy and courage in understanding the grave peril posed to India and by communicating it to Washington at the highest level. In India, he was constantly in touch with the Indian Prime Minister and other senior leaders and officials.

He was also deeply concerned at this juncture with the frequent statements of the Pakistani leaders which were pro-China and hostile to India and he conveyed his warning signals to Washington and to the Ambassador in Karachi. He considered Pakistan's efforts to force discussions on Kashmir as a blackmail and something highly deplorable in India's moment of despair.

Within a week of Nehru's letter of October 25 to President Kennedy, U.S. arms, mainly infantry weapons, arrived in India and further supplies were sent with great speed.

On the battle front the Chinese continued to pursue their heavy offensive on various fronts. The Indian forces had to be withdrawn from Towang on the South of the McMahon Line and the Chinese continued their offensive towards Tezpur in Assam state. They had also captured several posts in the Ladakh area, which was followed by the Chinese attacks in Walong area in the NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency). By October 30, according to the reports from India, the Chinese forces had occupied 2,000 square miles of Indian territory in Ladakh and a 3,000 square mile area in the NEFA. Meanwhile, in the face of strong criticism of the Indian Defence Minister, V.K. Krishna Menon, for his failure to foresee the impending Chinese threat and for his lack of responsibility in fully equipping the Indian army with necessary modern weapons, Nehru relieved him of his office.

On November 5, India withdrew her troops from some important posts in Ladakh including Daulat Beg Oldi with the result that the Chinese were able to take complete control of the 15,000 square miles already seized by them piecemeal in the past six years. China was now

in occupation of a vital strategic position in that area which had put her in command of both sides of the Karakoram pass. Similarly, China's conquest of Walong and Bomdila in the North-East had secured her dominant position on the Eastern frontier.

The U.S. State Department announced on November 10, that U.S. emergency arms aid to India, which started on November 3, had been completed. During that period India had received an estimated $5 million worth of light infantry weapons, ammunition, transport and communications equipment. Also, responding to Prime Minister Nehru's urgent request for supply of more arms, President Kennedy sent a U.S. mission headed by Averell Harriman to New Delhi on November 21 to assess India's need for U.S. weapons. It was also reported that a few days earlier, India's Ambassador in Washington, in exchange of letters with Talbot of the State Department, had assured the United States that India would use American military supplies only to combat Chinese aggression and that U.S. military equipment would be returned once India had disposed of the threat of the Chinese invasion.

Prime Minister Macmillan also had announced in the House of Commons on November 20 that Britain was considering increasing its military aid to India, and that three RAF planes had left Singapore for India the same day with the urgently requested arms.

Precisely at this stage of the U.S. and British decisions to rush more arms to India, November 21, the Chinese Government announced a cease-fire. It proposed that China would withdraw her troops twelve and a half miles behind the line of actual control which existed on November 7, 1959, and also called upon India to do the same. She threatened, however, that if India tried to recover the positions lost since September 8, 1962, the Chinese Government would take retaliatory action. She had already reported that her troops had driven Indian soldiers from "all the 43 aggressive strong points in Ladakh area." The Chinese objective obviously was to force upon India the recognition of her occupation of Ladakh. The fighting stopped on November 22 after the Chinese declaration of unilateral cease-fire.

In reply to the Chinese proposal for cease-fire and withdrawals in Ladakh to the line of actual control in November 1959, Nehru pointed out that there was actually "no line of control" but a series of positions forcibly occupied by the Chinese troops since 1957. They had already changed the status quo of the boundary by aggression and unilaterally. The dissimulated line of control of November 7, 1959, was precisely what the Chinese had occupied since October 20, 1962. India had been protesting against the forcible alteration of the status quo since 1957 which had been further consolidated by China since September 8,

1962. What the Chinese were proposing was to retain all the territories in Ladakh acquired by aggression. The Government of India could in no case agree to this proposal. The Chinese proposal would leave her in occupation of 2,000 square miles of Indian territory in Ladakh which she did not control on September 8, 1962. India's proposal was that the status quo of September 8, 1962, when the major Chinese aggression started, should be restored as a basis for further negotiations.

Although the fighting stopped after November 22, no negotiations could possibly take place with the Chinese determination to legitimize her illegal occupation of the territories in Ladakh. While China had started thinning out her troops from the front-line positions in the North-East, she did not withdraw from her positions in the Ladakh area. Rather, there were persistent reports of further induction of troops by her in the Ladakh area and construction of more roads by her along the Indian borders.

In March 1963, there were also several sharp and provocative notes from the Chinese Government, two of them according to Nehru quite threatening and scurrilous. India was constantly compelled to refute these false Chinese allegations. The Chinese peaceful professions were further belied by her establishment of a military post in Ladakh near Daulat Beg Oldi at a place deep in the Indian territory and far beyond anything claimed by China. We also saw a threatening statement of the Chinese Defence Minister to the effect that while earlier the Chinese soldiers outnumbered Indian troops by 3 to 1 now they were 5 to 1. Great resentment was also caused in India by the Chinese parading 27 of the captured Indian military officers in Chinese cities, which India rightly protested was a "barbaric practice reminiscent of the middle ages."

For these reasons, India's main concern now became to be fully prepared for further Chinese aggression and not to be caught unawares as it had happened in October 1962.

The 26-member U.S. Fact-Finding Mission, headed by Averell Harriman arrived in New Delhi on November 22. The British also sent a special mission headed by John Tilney, Under Secretary for Commonwealth Relations. A couple of days later, Duncan Sandys, British Commonwealth Relations Secretary, also arrived in Delhi.

Britain and India signed on November 27 agreements for supply of arms for defending India against Chinese attacks. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan had said in the House of Commons on November 27 that India was to be given military aid within certain financial limits and

that India had agreed to limitations on the use of arms and would "offer them back to Britain when no longer needed."

Pakistani Reactions and Strategy during and after the India-China War

Mention has already been made how Pakistan in her search for parity with India and to secure military and political support against her, had signed the Mutual Defence Agreement with the United States in May 1954, and had later, in the same year, joined the South-East Asia Treaty Organization.

As Sino-Indian relations deteriorated with the Tibetan rebellion and the Chinese intrusions across the Indian frontiers, Pakistan started making moves to improve her relations with the People's Republic of China. In fact, President Ayub Khan had soon after assuming power in 1958, announced his intention for a more balanced policy towards China and the Soviet Union.

Initially, the Chinese remained highly critical of Pakistan because of her military alliances, and Pakistan also had serious reservations about Chinese intentions. Some Pakistani leaders and the press had severely criticized the Chinese suppression of the revolt in Tibet which they compared to the Soviet action in Hungary. Chinese claims against India across the McMahon Line based on her maps also had caused concern in Pakistan with the obvious threat of similar claims by China against the territory under the Pakistani occupation. Consequently, statements were made in Pakistan stressing the sanctity of the McMahon Line and her determination to stand firmly on this issue.

By the end of 1959, however, a definite change was visible. Pakistan was no longer critical of the Chinese action in Tibet nor of the Chinese threats to the Indian posts South of the McMahon Line. President Ayub Khan even termed Ladakh as a disputed territory. By November 1959, Pakistan had approached the Chinese Government suggesting the demarcation of the boundary between Sinkiang and the Pakistani-occupied part of Ladakh.

Background of Indian Offers of "No War Pact" and Ayub's Proposal of 1959 for a "Joint Defence Agreement"

With this new threat to India's security and, as some thought, to the peace of South Asia as a whole, the question often arose what efforts India and Pakistan had made in the past to mutually reassure themselves against any aggression from each other and what, if any,

had been their thinking on a joint security concept in case of a common external threat.

As early as 1949, Nehru had offered a "No War Pact" to Pakistan to allay Pakistani anxieties. Pakistan straightaway rejected it. Later on, similar offers were made by Prime Ministers Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi but to no effect.

While watching the Sino-Pakistan rapprochement and collusion at the end of 1959, one was poignantly reminded of President Ayub Khan's offer of a "Joint Defence Agreement" to Prime Minister Nehru on April 24, 1959. At that time, Pakistan seemed seriously concerned about China's expansionist policies. Pakistan's Ambassador Mohammed Ali said in Tokyo on April 30, 1959: "This [Tibetan issue] should jolt Asian people out of their complacency. . . The Tibetan revolt should have more impact on Asia than the invasion of Hungary by Russia. . . The Chinese have followed the same pattern. It should open the eyes of Asia to the danger of Red Imperialism."[7] China on her part accused Pakistan of "slandering the Chinese people, interfering in China's internal affairs, sowing discord in the relations between China and India and agitating the cold war."[8] The Chinese saw in President Ayub's joint defence proposal a plot hatched by the Americans to create hostility against China. To warn India against this move and to seek the understanding of the Indian Government, the Chinese Ambassador in New Delhi had met the Indian Foreign Secretary on May 16, 1959.[9]

In reply to Ayub Khan's proposal, Nehru had asked who the joint defence was aimed at. He said in the Lok Sabha on May 4, 1959:[10]

> I am all for settling our problem with Pakistan and living normal, friendly and neighbourly lives—but we do not want to have common defence policy which is almost some kind of a military alliance—I do not understand against whom people talk about common defence policies

The implication was that the sole problem was the bilateral confrontation between two countries, posing constant danger of war. A No War Pact, it was argued would be relevant while a joint defence agreement in the absence of an external threat seemed uncalled for.

Dawn, May 1, 1959.

[8]R.N. Trivedi: *Sino-Indian Border Dispute; Jen-Min-Jin Pao*, July 23, 1959.

[9]Govt. of India, *Notes, Memoranda and Agreements signed between the Governments of India and China 1954-59*, White Paper, p. 76.

[10]Ibid., pp. 75-6.

With hindsight, one was now amazed that the Government of India did not foresee the common threat from China especially with India's experience of the previous three years of Chinese aggressive designs in our territorial integrity by military incursions and by her repudiation of the traditional boundaries with India. Pakistan was apparently more conscious of this threat of Chinese aggression. A couple of years later, we had to discover that there had been a common enemy but by then Pakistan, in her national interest, had made up with China, the common enemy, and was only too happy to exploit India's difficulties.

Ayub Khan wrote later:

> There was nothing sinister in the proposal, nor was I the first one to have made it. The Quaid-e-Azam thought that it was of vital importance to Pakistan and India, as independent sovereign States, to collaborate in a friendly way jointly to defend their frontiers both on land and sea against any aggression.[11]

He quoted Jinnah's interview with Eric Streiff, Special Correspondent of the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung*, Zurich, on March 11, 1948, in which he said:

> Personally, I have no doubt in my mind that our own paramount interests demand that the Dominion of Pakistan and the Dominion of India should coordinate for the purpose of playing their part in international affairs and the developments that may take place. But this depends entirely on whether Pakistan and India can resolve their own differences and grave domestic issues in the first instance. In other words, if we can put our house in order internally, then we may be able to play a very great part externally in all international affairs.[12]

If Jinnah had survived for another five or six years, it might have been possible to resolve, with his farsightedness and charisma, some of the bilateral differences and domestic difficulties. The succeeding leaders in Pakistan, rather than working for such a goal, perpetuated and aggravated the differences and the disputes because of their political rivalries and domestic compulsions. It was a great vision that Jinnah had placed before the two countries—"common security concept for two sovereign and friendly States." How tragic it was that time had to prove us both incapable of realizing his vision even for the next 40 years!

[11]Ayub Khan: *Friends Not Master*, p.126.
[12]Ibid.

Even if the danger from China was not fully appreciated, which appeared so short-sighted at the end of 1958, I could not help feeling that a joint defence agreement would have greatly contributed to confidence building between India and Pakistan. Their commitment to stand by each other in case of external threat to one of them would have had a great impact on the minds of the people in both countries. In this context, I greatly appreciated the views of our leading journalist, B.B. Verghese, when he wrote:

> Indo-Pakistan entente would constitute a powerful factor making for stability in Asia. Continued discord, on the other hand, would be a major source of weakness to both . . . It would not be inappropriate if the events in Tibet were to engender some fresh thinking on the subject of our relations with Pakistan.

Khan's proposal was that as Pakistan was already committed to defence arrangements with the United States, SEATO and CENTO, India's joint defence agreement with Pakistan would have militated against her policy of non-alignment. In my view, it should have been possible to conclude a joint defence agreement limiting it to any threat to Pakistan or India, and specifically stressing India's policy of non-alignment vis-a-vis Pakistan's military alliances. In any case, the offer called for a receptive mood to discuss implications of the Pakistani proposal, which unfortunately did not take place.

Ayub's statement of November 3, 1959, had tried to reassure India on this point. He had said: "The proposal did not necessarily mean association in foreign policy." He subsequently elaborated on this: "It meant defence of the subcontinent without any alignment with any power bloc."[13] This could be done under the arrangement of a mutual peace treaty.

Some argued that, rebuffed by India, the Pakistan President went on to befriend China, despite initial reservations, with a view to safeguard Pakistan's security interest. This, however, is open to question. For even when suggesting a joint defence agreement, President Ayub Khan was making the solution of some major problems a precondition. This was especially clear during his talks at Palam airport with Nehru on September 1, 1959. He stressed this again later when he wrote:

> What I had in mind was a general understanding for peace between the two countries. I emphasized that the prerequisite for such an

[13] *Pakistan Times*, January 22, 1960.

> understanding was the solution of big problems like Kashmir and the canal waters. Once these were resolved, the armies of the two countries could disengage and move to their respective vulnerable frontiers. This would give us the substance of joint defence, that is, freedom from fear of each other and freedom to protect our respective frontiers.[14]

He thus confirmed the views of those of our officials who believed that his joint defence proposal was not sincere but was aimed at forcing India to give up her position on Kashmir and the canal waters dispute.

Sino-Pakistan Entente

During the next two years, several factors further contributed to a better understanding between Pakistan and China. Pakistan had been disillusioned with the lack of U.S. support on the Kashmir question in the recent Security Council meetings while the Soviet Union had stood unequivocally by India. Pakistan was thus prepared to annoy America by cultivating China as a counterweight against India. With the widening of the Sino-Soviet rift after Mao's strong criticism of the Khrushchev-Eisenhower Camp David meeting in October 1959, Chinese strategy also dictated friendship with Pakistan in view of the strained relations with the Soviet Union and the emerging confrontation with India. As a consequence, China started favouring Pakistan's point of view on Kashmir; and in December 1961 Pakistan for the first time voted for the admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Organization, which she had always opposed in the past under the American influence.

On May 3, 1962, China accepted Pakistan's suggestion to start discussions on the demarcation of the boundary between Sinkiang and Gilgit in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and an agreement to delineate and demarcate the boundary was signed on March 2, 1963. This mutual understanding suited both Governments to affront and provoke India. The Pakistan Government could show, by somewhat suddenly and unabashedly sacrificing its principled stand, that it was prepared to discuss the boundary question as against India's intransigence. Pakistan, thereby, also got recognition by China of her case on Kashmir. The sacrifice to China of several thousand square miles of territory in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was considered a sound bargain in return for securing China's strong support against India.

[14] *Dawn*, May 11, 1959.

China, on her part, could be gratified that Pakistan had resiled from her previous position on the traditional boundary and could be counted upon as an ally against India in spite of Pakistan's membership of the Western-sponsored military pacts. India lodged a strong protest with Pakistan and China at their agreement to demarcate the boundary arguing that Pakistan had no legal right to initiate such talks with China as there was no common frontier between the two countries.

But except for recording the oft-repeated legal position this warning would have had no practical relevance. In practical terms the state of Jammu and Kashmir had become an integral part of India and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was treated as part of Pakistan.

Her resolute decision to forge close strategic link with China determined Pakistan's actions and pronouncements after the Chinese large-scale invasion of India on October 20, 1962. Pakistani sympathies were fully with China and her leaders started criticizing India for the conflict. Thereafter, the Pakistani efforts were to vilify India with a view to win goodwill and friendship of China. The Pakistani leaders also protested against Western military aid to India.

Pakistan's Strong Criticism of Western Military Aid to India

As explained earlier, Nehru had made an appeal to the Governments of the United States and Great Britain for defence equipment and supplies for the Indian forces immediately after the Chinese onslaught. The response of both the governments had been very sympathetic and prompt.

On October 22, the U.K. Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Duncan Sandys, had announced that the British Government "profoundly deplore the attack by China against a fellow member of the Commonwealth, have the utmost sympathy with the Government and people of India, and admire their patience and restraints in the face of repeated provocations." He also categorically stated that the British Government had always recognized the McMahon Line as the frontier of India and, of course, continued to do so.

I had also been informed by the British Commonwealth Office that arrangements were being made for continuous supply of small arms from Britain both by air and sea.

Similarly, President Kennedy had promised immediate help by supplying arms to India after he had received Nehru's letter on October 25.

When, in answer to India's requests Britain and the United States arranged to send arms to help India respond to China's border aggression, the Pakistani leaders were infuriated and strongly criticized this move. Two days after President Kennedy's decision on October 25 to send arms to India, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ali, stated that his Government would regard U.S. military assistance to India as "an unfriendly act."[15] He also took the opportunity to stress that unless the Kashmir dispute was settled, any supply of arms to India would be a danger to Pakistan.

President Kennedy sought to pacify Pakistan. In a letter to President Mohammad Ayub Khan on October 28, he pointed out that, in his opinion, the attack of Communist China on India was a threat to the whole Indian subcontinent including Pakistan and both countries had a common interest in opposing it. In a later communication to President Ayub, President Kennedy said: "U.S. aid to India in no way diminishes or qualifies our commitment to Pakistan and we had made it clear to both Governments as well."[16]

In his letter of October 28, President Kennedy made an important suggestion to President Ayub Khan asking him to send a private message to Nehru assuring him that he could count on Pakistan's taking no action on Indian frontiers to alarm India. In that case, India could shift its forces from the Western frontiers to meet the Chinese.aggression in the North. Ayub Khan, in his reply of November 5, strongly objected to this suggestion. He said:

> I am surprised that such a request is being made to us. After all, what we have been doing is nothing but to contain the threat that was constantly posed by India to us. Is it in conformity with human nature that we should cease to take such steps as are necessary for our self-preservation?[17]

President Kennedy had not asked President Ayub Khan to lower his defences against India. All he had asked him was to assure India that no aggression would be committed against her while she was facing the Chinese aggression. Soon thereafter, on November 5, President Ayub Khan warned the Western powers in a press statement that the shipment of arms to India could enlarge and prolong the conflict between India and China. It was also announced that Pakistan would not allow any arms supplies to India to pass through her territory.

[15]*The Times*, March 1, 1962.
[16]Ayub Khan: *Friends Not Masters*, p. 148.
[17]Ibid., pp. 141-2.

About this time, at a reception at the Turkish Embassy in London, I met General Iskander Mirza, who after his exile by President Ayub Khan had settled down in London. He took me aside and said:

> If I were in Karachi today, I would have immediately flown to Delhi to meet Pandit Ji [Mr. Nehru] and would have told him that, whatever our differences, at this time of Chinese aggression, Pakistan will solidly stand by India in her defence. Our differences remain and will have to be settled honourably but today Pakistani armed forces will be available to help India wherever she wished to deploy them. The world should know that despite our mutual differences, we shall jointly oppose any threat to the subcontinent. Of course, Ayub Khan is quite incapable of such an initiative.

I was duly impressed and expressed appreciation for his statesmanlike thinking. I added that only by such bold and imaginative steps by both countries could we hope to transform the present tragic destiny of the subcontinent.

If a No War Pact and a joint defence agreement had been signed some four or five years earlier, a measure of trust and cooperation might have been built up to justify collaboration and solidarity in 1962. In the then existing circumstances, Pakistan naturally derived real satisfaction from the catastrophic situation India was facing on her northern frontiers.

With a view to put greater pressure on the Western powers, President Ayub Khan summoned an emergency session of the National Assembly on November 21. The Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali told the Assembly that Pakistan was faced with a grave and critical situation caused by the fact "that some of our allies and friends in their wisdom have decided to rush arms and equipment and military aid to India, posing a threat to our safety and security."[18] President Ayub said in his speeches that the large expansion of the Indian army was aimed at subjugating the small neighbouring countries, particularly Pakistan.

But this was propaganda far removed from the facts. Both the U.S. and Britain had laid extremely stringent conditions on their military aid to India. For example, on November 14, our Ambassador in Washington, B.K. Nehru, in an exchange of letters, had given the following undertakings on behalf of the Government of India:

(a) India would use American military supplies only to repel the Chinese aggression;

[18]National Assembly of Pakistan Debates, Vol. 2.

(b) The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi would have the facilities for observing that such arms were used only for the defence of India against China; and
(c) Such armaments as were no longer needed for that purpose would be returned to the United States Government.

An agreement was signed on similar lines between the British Commonwealth Secretary, Duncan Sandys and the Indian Defence Minister, Y.B. Chavan. India committed herself to (a) offer necessary facilities to the representatives of the U.K. Government for the purpose of observing and reviewing the use of these arms and equipment and to provide all possible information required by them; and (b) offer to return to the U.K. Government such weapons as were no longer needed for the purpose for which they were provided.

This was also confirmed by the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, in his speech in the House of Commons on November 27. He said that India had "agreed to certain limitations on the use of the arms" and would "offer them back to Britain when no longer needed."

Kashmir Discussions

We had seen how Pakistani leaders, while opposing the western military aid to India, had stressed that unless the Kashmir dispute was settled "the supply of arms to India is a danger to Pakistan." In the words of President Ayub, "these weapons may well be used against Pakistan in the absence of an overall settlement with India."[19] He was reported to have told the American representative, George Ball, on September 4 that: (a) Pakistan was menaced by India's increased military capabilities, which had been made possible by greater U.S. arms aid; (b) U.S. arms assistance to India should be used as a "club to force India to settle the dispute over Kashmir on terms acceptable to Pakistan"; (c) Pakistan's "real enemy" was India and Pakistanis did not believe China's attack on India in 1962 was a prelude to overrunning the subcontinent.

The clamour, therefore, was that the Kashmir question, dormant for many years, must be reopened and settled in accordance with the wishes of Pakistan and that the U.S. and Britain must compel India to agree to it. Otherwise, they curiously argued, India would commit aggression against Pakistan with the weapons being supplied by the Western powers. Their real concern was that, with India getting military aid from the Western powers, it would become difficult for

[19] Ayub Khan quoted by D.C. Jha: *Indo-Pak Relations*, p. 88.

Pakistan to invade the state of Kashmir and occupy it at this highly opportune juncture.

Under Pakistani exhortations, Averell Harriman and Duncan Sandys, in their discussions with the Indian leaders, not only advised India to hold discussions on Kashmir, but invariably urged that India should withdraw most of her troops from the Kashmir front to meet the Chinese attack. India could not have left the Kashmir border defenceless at a time when China and Pakistan had conspired to deal a blow to India's territorial integrity on their respective fronts. More so, as the U.S. had failed to get a pledge from Pakistan to refrain from military action in disputed Kashmir during the India-China war.

That this harsh judgement against Pakistan was not a mere flight of fancy was proved a couple of years later, when Pakistan invaded Kashmir in 1965. The Pakistani leaders were, in fact, convinced that with their superiority in arms and military equipment as compared to that of India, the time was favourable for the invasion. It is anticipating events but the seniormost Pakistani Generals in their memoirs wrote after the 1965 war that the invasion of Kashmir by the Pakistani army in 1965 was a well-planned aggression ordered by Pakistani leaders without seriously considering the disastrous consequences for Pakistan.

In their anxiety to relieve the Chinese threat to South Asia, the Western powers looked for better understanding and good relations between India and Pakistan. Perhaps, they genuinely believed that some agreement between the two countries on the Kashmir question would allow Pakistan to concentrate her forces to meet the Chinese threat.

Persuaded by Averell Harriman and Duncan Sandys, President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Nehru agreed to open talks at the political level in an effort to resolve the outstanding differences between the two countries. The first meeting of the two delegations took place in Rawalpindi on December 27-29. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister for Railways, Sardar Swaran Singh and the Pakistani delegation by their Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. To the general surprise and regret, the Pakistani Government suddenly made a public announcement, just before the meeting, that it had reached an agreement with China in principle on the common border of the Pakistan-occupied area of Kashmir and China. Though such an announcement about a *fait accompli* on an issue that was on the negotiating table was seen as a deliberate attempt to cast a shadow on the negotiations, the two delegations had frank discussions and explained their respective positions—Bhutto stressing the UN

Resolutions of 1950-53 while Swaran Singh reaffirmed the position that the state of Kashmir had become an integral part of India "by internationally accepted practices of law and democracy." Five more meetings followed during the next four months. Though the working groups of the delegations discussed various proposals, no headway could be made because the sharp fundamental differences between the two sides remained.

During this period, we in the High Commission had to maintain regular contact with some Members of the British Parliament on the question of the Chinese aggression and the Pakistani hostile attitude. Although I believed that the British and American leaders were honestly trying to play a mediatory role in Kashmir, many in India thought that the British Government was trying to twist India's arm on the Kashmir issue while promising to give military aid against China. This suspicion was further confirmed by what the Commonwealth Secretary, Duncan Sundys, said, while reporting in the House of Commons on December 3 on his mission to India and Pakistan. Sandys said that the United States and Britain had informed India that they would be unwilling to give her long-term military assistance as long as a large part of the Indian army was posted along the Pakistani border instead of being deployed against the Chinese.

The four Members of Parliament with whom I had close personal contacts—John Strachey, Douglas Jay, Arthur Bottomley and Fenner Brockway—would sometimes hint at the possibility of some Conservative leaders, because of their committed position, taking advantage of India's difficulty to help Pakistan. This came out in the open when Strachey (Labour) put a question to Prime Minister Macmillan in the House of Commons on May 7, whether the British Government was linking up the question of an agreement between India and Pakistan on Kashmir with the settlement of long-term military aid to India. Macmillan in reply said:

> That is the wrong phrase to use, and I am sorry Mr. Strachey has used it. We are not linking aid. We are making a long-term agreement and the work is about to be concluded. What we have done is to state that we would be sorry to see an appreciable part of the Indian army deployed not for defence against China but against Pakistan. That is not the same thing as linking one with the other. We shall go ahead with out plans. But we shall also try to do our duty by seeing if we can be of assistance in solving these problems.

Despite this formal assurance and the very friendly response to India's defence requirements, Duncan Sandys's persuasion in New Delhi on the Kashmir question had left behind an impression of his brusque pressurization. In contrast Averell Harriman had shown much greater concern for India's sensitivities and meticulously avoided any impression of the U.S. having some ulterior motives or extracting some price for the military aid against China. In fact, the speed with which the military supplies were sent, in spite of Nehru's emphasis on India's policy of non-alignment, had enhanced the U.S. prestige in India.

From the very beginning, there seemed little chance of reconciling the standpoints of Pakistan and India on the Kashmir dispute. Even if the strictly legal and constitutional position was stretched to some extent, was there any chance of a compromise? Any adjustment of the cease-fire line, minor or substantial, could not have satisfied Pakistan as its claim was to a major part of the Kashmir state, especially the Kashmir valley. As against that India would never have agreed that the legal accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir could be called into question.

As was well known over the past ten years, India, apart from her legal position, was totally opposed to any general or regional plebiscite as it was rightly feared that such plebiscites with communal propaganda would lead to religious riots and violence not only in Kashmir but all over India and East Pakistan. If the valley of Kashmir were partitioned, as some mediation proposals made by the U.S. representatives reportedly suggested, the result would again have been communal violence and disorders in the very heart of the Kashmir state, besides being a source of continuous communal violence and confrontation all over India and Pakistan. In any case, the idea of the division of Kashmir valley was not practical. As Nehru put it, "the Kashmir valley was a unit economically and psychologically and its partition would create more problems than it would solve. . ."

As we generally expected, the Ministerial-level talks between India and Pakistan finally broke down on May 16, 1963.

Possible Future Repercussions of the Sino-Pak Accord

On July 19, 1963, Bhutto, while opening a foreign policy debate in the National Assembly said (without directly mentioning either India or China): "Pakistan will not be alone if she becomes the victim of any aggression which would involve the largest State in Asia." The situation, he continued, had become more difficult because India had

been "menacingly bolstered by the Western powers," and Pakistan was thus left with no recourse but to "reshape" her foreign policy, which was being "reappraised."

The London *Times* comment on Bhutto's speech was:

> This is the first time that such a categorical statement about Chinese assistance to Pakistan in the event of aggression has been made. Lobby circles interpreted the statement as an indication that some sort of understanding between Rawalpindi and Peking on mutual defence had already been reached. Mr. Bhutto did not elaborate on the statement, but his declaration in the National Assembly was unambiguous. . .

The events of the past two years had left us in no doubt that Pakistan had reached a definite understanding with China on joint defence against India. While Bhutto had publicly announced Chinese support in case of aggression against Pakistan, Pakistani leaders privately hoped that Pakistan could launch aggression against India with the assurance that China would stand by her. In any case the question of "actual aggressor" could get fudged after the party concerned had launched its military action.

This collusion between Pakistan and China was to lead to confrontations and conflicts between India and Pakistan during the next eight years as the events of the 1965 Kashmir war and the 1971 Bangladesh war proved. Overconfident of Chinese support Pakistani leaders started their military aggression, but China refrained from opening a second front against India, though she did, of course, lend moral support to Pakistan and hold out verbal threats to India.

Communal Riots in East Pakistan and Pakistani Complaints of Eviction of Muslims from Assam and Tripura

With Indo-Pakistan relations having sunk to the lowest depth in 1962-63 during the India-China war, the beginning of 1964 brought more grim news. By the third week of January 1964, we started getting news of serious communal riots in East Pakistan. First reports indicated that more than 1,000 people had been killed in Dacca alone. Later came more reports of murder and arson in various areas of Dacca and of attacks on moving trains by hooligans.

As a result, there was an unprecedented influx of Hindu and Christian refugees into the Garo Hills district of India from Mymensingh district of East Pakistan. The estimates were that nearly 125,000 refugees had crossed over to India, of whom 35,000 were

Christians, mostly Roman Catholics and Baptists belonging to the Garo tribe. There were persistent complaints by the Indian spokesmen that the Pakistani police and the village defence corps known as "Ansars" had been conniving at looting, arson, kidnapping and forcible occupation of the land of the minority communities by the majority community, and Pakistani administrative authorities had failed to protect the minorities.

These communal disorders led to exchanges of strong protest notes between the two Governments. India accused the Pakistani authorities of driving out the minorities and taking no action against fanatical elements who indulged in their massacre, looting and forcible occupation of their houses. It was argued that the prevailing sense of insecurity drove the minority communities in large numbers to seek refuge in Indian territory. Pakistan had first blamed the Indian authorities for encouraging migrants by issuing entry permits into India to those who approached the Indian Consulates. Their numbers were, however, very small. Much larger numbers were fleeing across the frontier in a state of terror.

Later, the Pakistan Government alleged that the Indian authorities were evicting Muslims from Assam and Tripura in India to Pakistan. The Government of India explained that only those Muslims who had illegally entered these territories were being sent back to Pakistan after full judicial verification. The Indian note said that "India has nearly 50 million Muslims who fully participate in the national life of India in terms of fullest equality with members of other religions and under the Constitution of India enjoy the same rights as other citizens." Specific mention was made of the figures for April 1964, when forty-four Pakistani nationals who had either overstayed their visas or had illegally entered India had been asked to leave. These illegal infiltrators, who had been crossing over from the open border with Pakistan and settling down in the adjoining Indian districts, were a persistent problem for India. The Pakistan Government wanted that an international tribunal should investigate such cases, to which the Indian Government could not agree.

On the widespread communal riots the Indian Government wanted the Pakistan Government to take immediate steps to restore communal harmony and to rehabilitate the minorities. The President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, had suggested to President Ayub Khan that they should jointly issue an appeal to their people to dedicate themselves to communal harmony and to protect the lives and properties of the minorities. President Ayub rejected this suggestion on the ground that he had already issued such an appeal to his people. In any case, what

appeared most urgent was for both sides to strengthen the administrative arrangements and to have peace committees in various towns to calm communal hatred and fears of the minorities.

With these reports from East Pakistan, communal riots also flared up in West Bengal where the members of the Muslim community had to flee to East Bengal. While the Government of India had, according to Nehru, brought the situation under control within a few days, the Pakistani side continued to complain that there was looting and killing of the Muslim community in West Bengal and Bihar, especially in the towns of Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Raigarh and Kharsia.

On India's initiative Prime Minister Nehru and President Ayub Khan then decided that their Home Ministers should meet and adopt measures to end the inhumanity and communal disharmony. Recalling the agreement that had been signed between Prime Minister Nehru and Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan on April 8, 1950, they agreed that the Governments should implement those principles, according to which the minorities in each country would be assured of complete equality of citizenship irrespective of religion, and a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honour, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation and speech.

On March 1, President Ayub Khan made a very reassuring speech in which he said: "We regard the minority communities as a sacred trust and entitled to equal rights and privileges. Anyone who has been disturbed is welcome to return where he belongs and he will have all the support and assistance from us. We expect the same from India."

At their meeting in the second week of April the Home Ministers agreed on the urgent need for promoting communal harmony and creating a sense of security and confidence among the minorities. They decided upon certain administrative measures to ensure full protection to the minorities in both countries and to lay down deterrent punishment to the miscreants. These measures led to considerable lowering of communal tension in both countries. Matters might have turned even better if the Indian Home Minister's suggestion for a joint appeal for communal harmony, joint tours of the affected areas and joint machinery to supervise and report on the implementation of the agreements, as well as setting up of a Minority Commission in each country had been accepted by the Pakistani side.

On Pakistan's complaint of eviction of Muslims from the neighbouring districts of India, no understanding could be reached. While rejecting the Pakistani proposal for an international tribunal to investigate these evictions, India offered to suspend the service of quit notices and deportation of infiltrators for two months to give Pakistan

time to study Indian judicial procedures and satisfy herself that there were adequate safeguards against any Indian Muslim being mistaken for an illegal Pakistani infiltrator. For a long time to come this problem of infiltration of Muslims from East Bengal to Assam and Tripura and their eviction by India were to continue to be a source of acrimony between the two Governments.

Confrontation in the Rann of Kutch

In the beginning of 1965, there emerged serious tension and confrontation between India and Pakistan in a rather unexpected area, i.e., the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat state. India complained that there had been Pakistani intrusions in the Kutch district and Pakistani forces were being concentrated for some time across the Indian frontiers.

The factual position was that, although the border between the two countries in this area was well defined, the actual demarcation on the ground had not yet taken place. Pakistan had laid claims to certain areas which, according to India, were well within the territory controlled by India since August 1947. A suggestion had been made to the Government of Pakistan that the Surveyors-General of both countries should get together to demarcate the boundary, but the Pakistan Government insisted on first having an agreement in principle with India.

Meanwhile, there were several major encounters between the Indian and Pakistani troops in this region till June 1965. With the British Government mediating, the two sides agreed to cease-fire and an agreement was signed on June 30 by which the two Governments committed themselves to settle this boundary dispute either by consultations between their Ministers or through an international tribunal consisting of three members, with both countries nominating one member each and the Chairman to be selected jointly.

While welcoming the agreement, the Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, again made an offer of a no-war pact to Pakistan.

Finally the border dispute went up to the international tribunal under the chairmanship of Judge Gunnar Lagergren (Sweden), sitting with Dr. Nasrollah Entezam (Iran) and Dr. Ales Bebler (Yugoslavia), the latter two having been nominated respectively by Pakistan and India. Between February 15, 1964 and July 14, 1967, when the hearings were completed, the tribunal had held in Geneva 170 sittings, considered 600 memoranda and consulted 350 maps. Its award, given on February 21, 1968, was accepted by both Governments notwithstanding reservations.

At a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party a day earlier, many members had expressed their misgivings about the award. But speaking in Parliament on February 23, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said: "India would honour her commitment" on the tribunal's award, and that "it would be a sad day if we fail to meet our international commitments". Similarly, President Ayub Khan in his broadcast on March 1 said that the award must be accepted "in accordance with our undertaking, irrespective of whether it is good or bad."

5

From Indian High Commission in London to Indian High Commission in Pakistan

Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London

In early May 1965, I was informed in London by the Ministry that the Prime Minister had decided to send me as High Commissioner to Pakistan and that the agreement of the Pakistan Government had been sought. The news of becoming the envoy to my birthplace, of which I had such cherished memories, thrilled me.

My fear, however, was that the Pakistan Government might not agree to my appointment. An Ambassador from India who had lived more than thirty years in the West Punjab before the partition of India, and one who had a very large circle of friends among the officials and the politicians could cause serious embarrassment in a political system which was authoritarian and where the press was thoroughly controlled. The strict restrictions imposed on the Pakistanis and the Indian High Commission might break down despite the vigilance of the intelligence. Such an envoy could hear and see much more than would be acceptable to the authorities. Besides, as District Commissioner, I had taken some decisions which had hurt some leading persons in the pre-partition days and they could have been adverse to my reappearance on the new scene under a different hat. Several weeks passed and there was no further news from Delhi.

On the morning of June 17, the Commonwealth Heads of Government and their delegations from 21 countries were assembled on the Marlborough House lawns at London for a reception before the inauguration of the Commonwealth Conference. It was an impressive get-together, with Prime Minister Shastri and President Ayub from the subcontinent among them. While Shastri was talking to Lester Pearson, President Ayub came over and greeted Shastri. After some time, while introducing me to President Ayub, Prime Minister Shastri said: "Mr. President, this is our Deputy High Commissioner in London whom we hope to send as our next High Commissioner to Pakistan; we are

awaiting a reply from the Pakistan Government for his appointment." President Ayub straightaway said that they would be happy to receive me and that the Government of India could finalize the plans for my arrival in Pakistan.

Two decisions taken at the Conference deserve mention. "Deeply concerned by the gravity of the situation in Vietnam," the Conference decided to "make a contribution to a just and lasting peace." It was decided to send a Peace Mission to Moscow, China, USA and North Vietnam to explore the possibility of the cessation of hostilities and the terms for a peaceful settlement. The mission was to be led by the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, with President Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Sir Abu-bakar Takawa Balewa (Nigeria), Dr. Williams (Trinidad and Tobago) and Senanayake (Ceylon) as other members. Some Heads of Government criticized the fact that Wilson should lead the Peace Delegation as the British position was already committed. Prime Minister Wilson as the leader of the Commonwealth mission would, they argued, create the impression of the delegation being aligned in its attitude. To dispel such reservations, the members of the mission issued a statement stressing that the Commonwealth mission would represent the non-aligned position of the Commonwealth as a whole since the Commonwealth, as such, was in no way committed to either side of the conflict.

President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania expressed his views rather strongly in a BBC interview the next evening. "We should not," he said, "appear to be backing up Mr. Wilson or the USA on Vietnam. We must not appear to be aligned in any action we take." Similarly Murambi, the Foreign Minister of Kenya, while supporting the Commonwealth mission said that "he was opposed to Britain or any other country which has committed itself on the issue to be a member of the proposed mission." President Nkrumah, while supporting the mission, suggested that the Australian forces should be immediately withdrawn from Vietnam.

The developments during the next few days were to prove how the decision, though well-intentioned, was quite ill-advised. The Chinese, the Russians and the North Vietnamese refused to receive the mission. The Chinese comments were particularly harsh. On June 19, Chou En-lai, who was then in Cairo, denounced this Commonwealth initiative as "a manoeuvre in support of the U.S." and the peace talks a "hoax." These comments sounded to me at the time unduly gruff and offensive, but during the following years in my next assignment I was to have many occasions to see the abrasive language and the ungraceful style of Chinese diplomacy.

The second issue related to Southern Rhodesia on which the Commonwealth Heads of Government unanimously expressed their total opposition to the "Unilateral Declaration of Independence" and wanted a firm commitment to the principle of majority rule. Arthur Bottomley, the British Commonwealth Secretary, assured the Conference that the British Government's efforts at further constitutional development would be based on the principle of majority rule and elimination of racial discrimination.

Arrival in Pakistan and Meeting with President Ayub Khan

The evening of August 5 was bright and cool as we landed at the Karachi airport. I was returning to Pakistan at a time when all signs seemed to be propitious for better Indo-Pak relations. Recently, in the Rann of Kutch conflict, sense had prevailed on both sides with the acute realization that there was no rational substitute to peaceful settlement of disputes and differences. Symbolically enough, the agreement had been signed in New Delhi by two cousins—Arshad Hussain, High Commissioner of Pakistan and Azim Hussain, his cousin and brother-in-law who was India's Secretary for External Affairs. Like them, there were a large number of officers and publicmen in one country who had their close relations in the other. Iskander Baig was, for example, Foreign Secretary in Pakistan and his brother was Chief of Protocol and later Indian Ambassador to Iran and Indonesia. A. Rahman, one of India's senior Ambassadors had his brother, General Atiq-ul-Rehman, in the Pakistan army. When the former was our Ambassador to Iran, his brother paid an official visit to Tehran. There was quite a stir among the Iranian Generals who were waiting to receive the Pakistani General at the airport and who did not know about this relationship, when the Indian Ambassador appeared on the scene. But he allayed their fears when he informed them that he had come to receive his brother.

At the Karachi airport General Shaukat Hayat, the Chief of Protocol, after formal words of welcome mentioned that he had received a couple of calls from the President's office in Islamabad making inquiries about my arrival as the plane from Delhi was three and a half hours late. I conveyed my thanks and did not attach any particular importance to his remarks about urgent calls from Islamabad.

Prakash Kaul, the Deputy High Commissioner, had laid on a welcome dinner for us with all the senior officers and their families that evening. In the middle of the dinner, the telephone rang. Kaul took the call and came back smiling to announce that the President, having learnt

of my arrival, had suggested that the High Commissioner designate, if convenient, might reach Islamabad next morning so that he could present his credentials to the President right away. This, it was explained, was being done so that I could start my official responsibilities without unnecessary delay. We all were rather pleased as the date previously fixed was some five days later. Little did we know that the President had his own reasons to have this ceremony out of the way during the next 36 hours.

During dinner, we discussed business. "But where are the Letters of Credence?" asked the Administrative First Secretary. For some reason, the Foreign Office in Delhi had always refused to hand over the Letters of Credence to the Ambassadors-designate and insisted upon sending these by diplomatic pouch. Hurriedly, the pouch, which had come by the same flight, was brought from the Chancery and opened up only to find that the Letters of Credence had not been sent by this bag.

A way had to be found to acquire these, post-haste. Telephone communications with India were almost impossible in those days. The only available flight to India was the Alitalia flight at midnight reaching Bombay at 3 a.m. This could connect with the Indian Airlines flight leaving Bombay at 4 a.m. and reaching Delhi at 7 a.m. We decided to send an attaché by this flight hoping that he would catch the Delhi flight from Bombay and further hoping that he would be able to contact the officer concerned in his house, get the documents from the Ministry and catch the Afghan Airways flight leaving at 9 a.m. reaching Lahore at 10:30 a.m. where he would join our flight to Islamabad. If he missed this only flight between Delhi and Lahore, the whole arrangement would fall through. Even if he tried to return via Bombay he would reach Karachi late in the evening. The imponderables seemed to be too many, but Parkash Kaul, being an incorrigible optimist, dispatched the attaché to Bombay at midnight and booked our passages to Lahore by the Pakistan Airways early next morning.

Having reached Lahore the next day, the morning of August 5, we were anxiously waiting for the Afghan Airways flight. To our great relief, the official emerged out of the plane and had brought with him the necessary documents. He explained, as was to be expected, that he woke up three different officers and brought them to the Foreign Office, got the documents from a sealed bag and rushed to the airport in time for the flight. We took the flight to Rawalpindi soon thereafter and within an hour of reaching the Flashman Hotel, we went to the Foreign Office in Islamabad for the usual calls as required by protocol.

On the sixth morning, accompanied by DHC, Parkash Kaul and four other colleagues, I drove to the President's office to present my Letters of Credence at a simple and informal ceremony marked by the warmth of welcome by the Foreign Office officials and the President's Senior Staff, some of whom were old friends. I read my speech in rather Persianized Urdu, and the Pakistani officials seemed to be highly pleased pointing out that was that the first occasion when a foreign Ambassador had made his formal speech in Pakistan's national language. President Ayub's reply to my speech was rather disappointing. Though his clipped English was admirable in intonation and idiom, his proficiency in Urdu, as I was to discover later, was far from adequate. He spoke half in English and half in Urdu but impressed me greatly, whatever his *aarriere penée* , with his courtesy, dignity and warm informality.

The main theme of my speech was that mutual trust, friendship and active cooperation between our two nations was the crying need of our time and would meet the ardent aspirations of our two peoples. "It was the sincere hope of the Government and the people of India," I said, "that our relations would steadily improve leading to all-round cooperation based on mutual goodwill, respect and sovereign equality. . . There are no other two nations which are so close to each other; we are brothers in the sense that few other peoples in the world are." I assured the President of the consistent objective of my Government to settle all our differences by peaceful negotiations and friendly exchanges in a spirit of understanding and goodwill. In this connection, I referred to the recently concluded Rann of Kutch agreement which was a tribute to the leadership of the two countries. During the course of the conversation later, somewhat emotionally, I added that I was born in Pakistan and spent more than thirty years as the son of this land. My affections would always remain engaged with the people of Pakistan. He could, therefore, be assured that if I found that any decision of my Government was intended to hurt Pakistan's national interest, I would request my Government to be relieved of my mission to Islamabad.

President Ayub was even more forthcoming than I had expected. He said he would reciprocate every move from India for better understanding and cooperation between the two countries and that I could count on his personal support in building up a better relationship between our countries. He said it was sad that we both were spending vast sums of money on defence due to the present unfortunate relationship—the money which should be diverted towards economic development to raise the standard of living of our peoples. The two

countries continued to confront each other. This weakened them in the face of any external threat which they had to be prepared to face jointly with their combined strength.

Infiltration of Pakistani Guerrillas into the State of Jammu and Kashmir

Little did I know that precisely at the time, when the President was warmly reciprocating my sentiments for a happier and a more cooperative relationship between our two countries, thousands of well-armed Pakistani guerrillas, under his orders, had started crossing the cease-fire line in Kashmir on a mission of violence, sabotage and assassinations. What we had mistaken for unusual courtesy with which the presentation of my Letters of Credence had been arranged was nothing but inordinate haste to have done with it before the news spread about the large-scale guerrilla skirmishes in Kashmir.

Within 48 hours, the dispatches from India brought the details of the shocking news. Since the night of August 5, many batches of well-armed Pakistani military personnel and others, all in civilian clothes, had been sneaking into the territory of Kashmir state and were indulging in violence, arson and sabotage. The Indian security forces with the active help of the Kashmiri people had arrested scores of them and many were being killed in the skirmishes, but more waves of infiltrators were clandestinely crossing the cease-fire line all the time.

On August 8, after an emergency meeting of the Cabinet, the Home Minister, Gulzari Lal Nanda, announced to the press that there had been extensive infiltrations by armed men from Pakistan, all along the cease-fire line and also at some points across the international border between Jammu and West Pakistan, carrying weapons and explosives to commit acts of sabotage and foment disturbances. The next day, I received a message from Prime Minister Shastri, instructing me to see President Ayub immediately and lodge a strong protest at this ill-concealed Pakistani aggression on the Indian territory, of which the Government of India took a very serious view. The Prime Minister wanted me to warn the President that unless these infiltrations were stopped forthwith, the consequences for Indo-Pak relations would be very grave.

My telephone call on the tenth morning from the Flashman Hotel in Rawalpindi to the President's Secretary seeking an early interview brought the reply that the President was in a Cabinet meeting and that the secretary could contact him only after the meeting was over. For the next five hours, my telephone calls to the offices of the President and



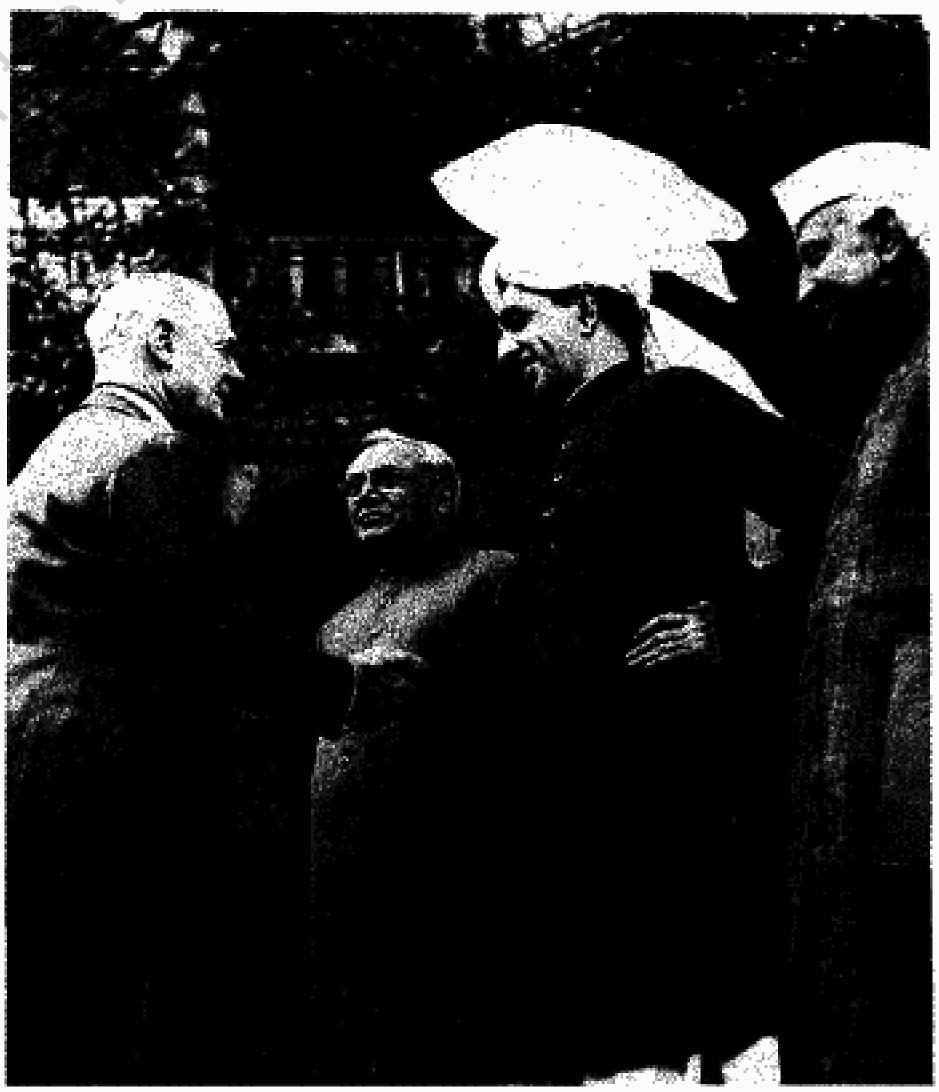
Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi during negotiations for India's Independence.



Jawaharlal Nehru and Jinnah about to leave Birla House to see Mahatma Gandhi, New Delhi,



Lord Wavell and Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Leader of the Muslim League at the Simla Conference.



Lord Wavell receives Bhula Bhai Desai, leader of Congress party in the National Assembly, Sir Khizar Hayat Khan, Premier of Punjab and Dr. Khan Sahib Premier of the North-West



Two great Nationalist and secular Muslim leaders at the Simla Conference, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Sir Khizar Hayat Khan.

Lord Mountbatten with Congress, Muslim League and Sikh leaders on the eve of partition.





Mountbatten with Nehru and Jinnah discussing the Partition Plan.



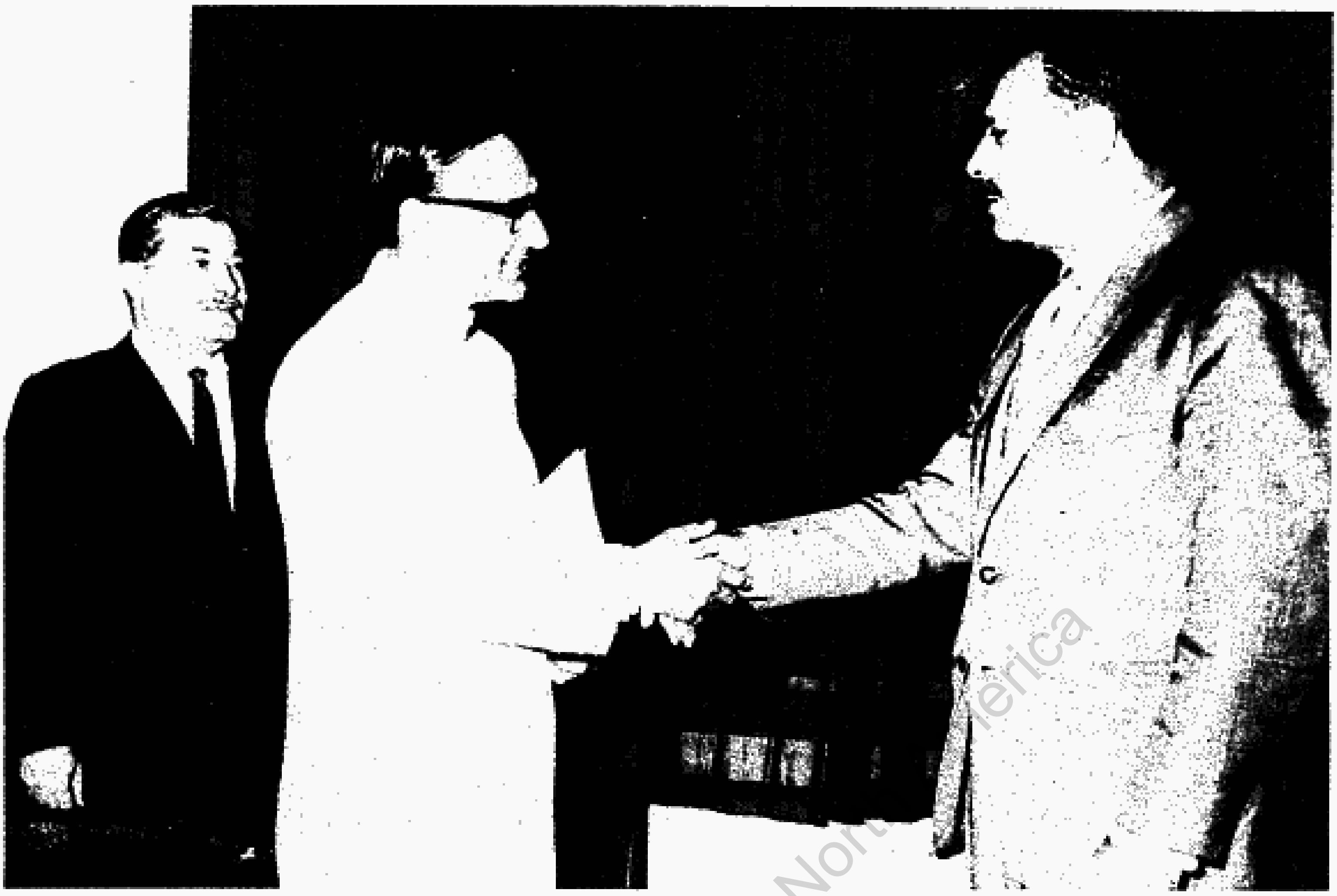
Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru received their Excellencies N.A. Bulganin and N.S. Khrushchev at the airport on November 18, 1955.



President Ayub Khan receives Prime Minister Nehru
in Karachi on Sept. 18, 1960.



President Ayub Khan, Prime Minister Nehru and Illif, Vice-President of the
World Bank sign the Indus Water Treaty on Sept. 19, 1960.



The author Kewal Singh presents his Letters of Credence to President Ayub Khan on August 6, 1965, as High Commissioner of India.



High Commissioner Kewal Singh places a wreath on the Mazar of Quad-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah on August 18, 1965.



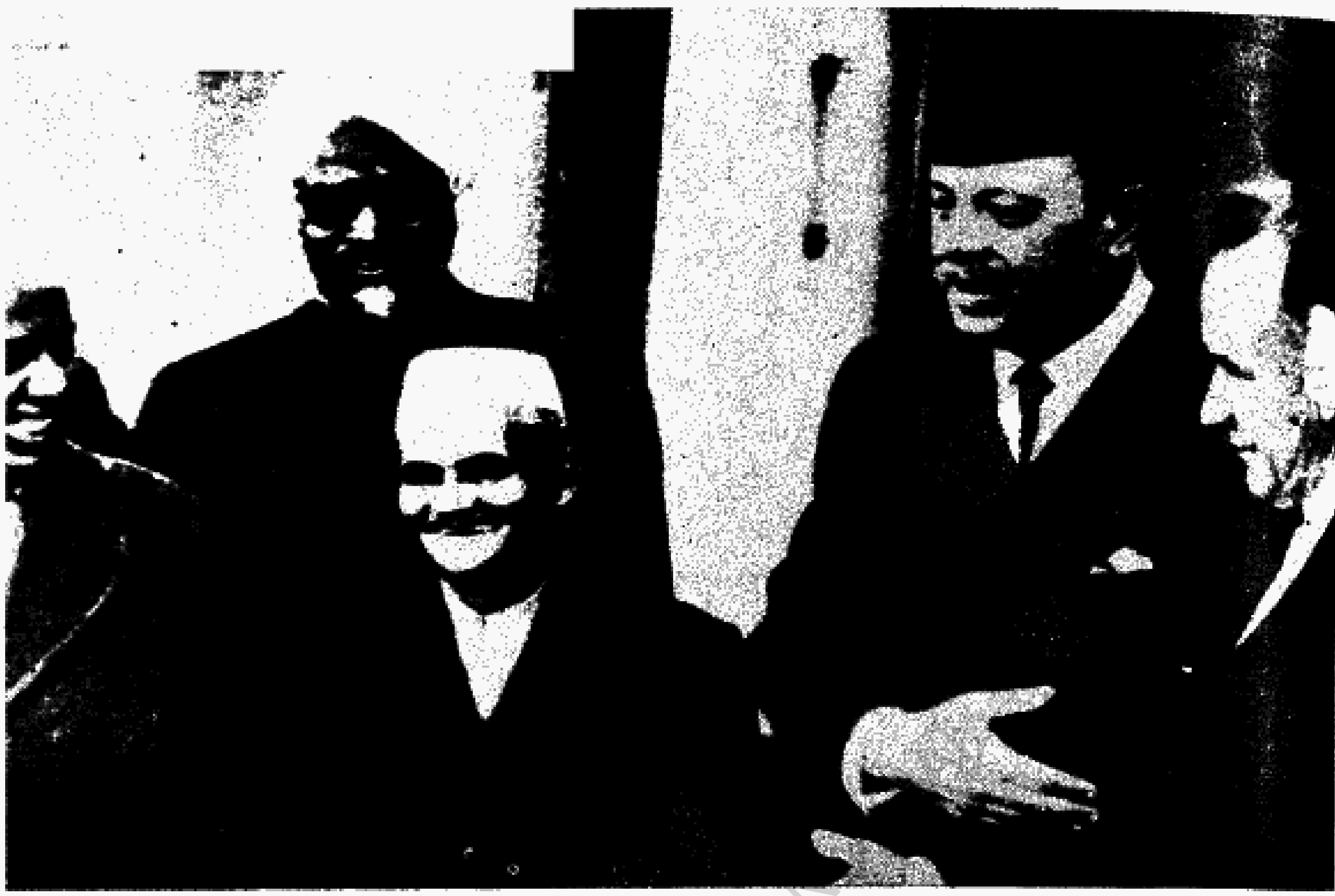
First informal meeting between Prime Minister Kosygin, President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on January 4, 1966 at Tashkent.



President Ayub Khan, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and the author Ambassador Kewal Singh at Tashkent.



President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri before their first private discussion on January 4, 1966. They used to meet without any advisers.



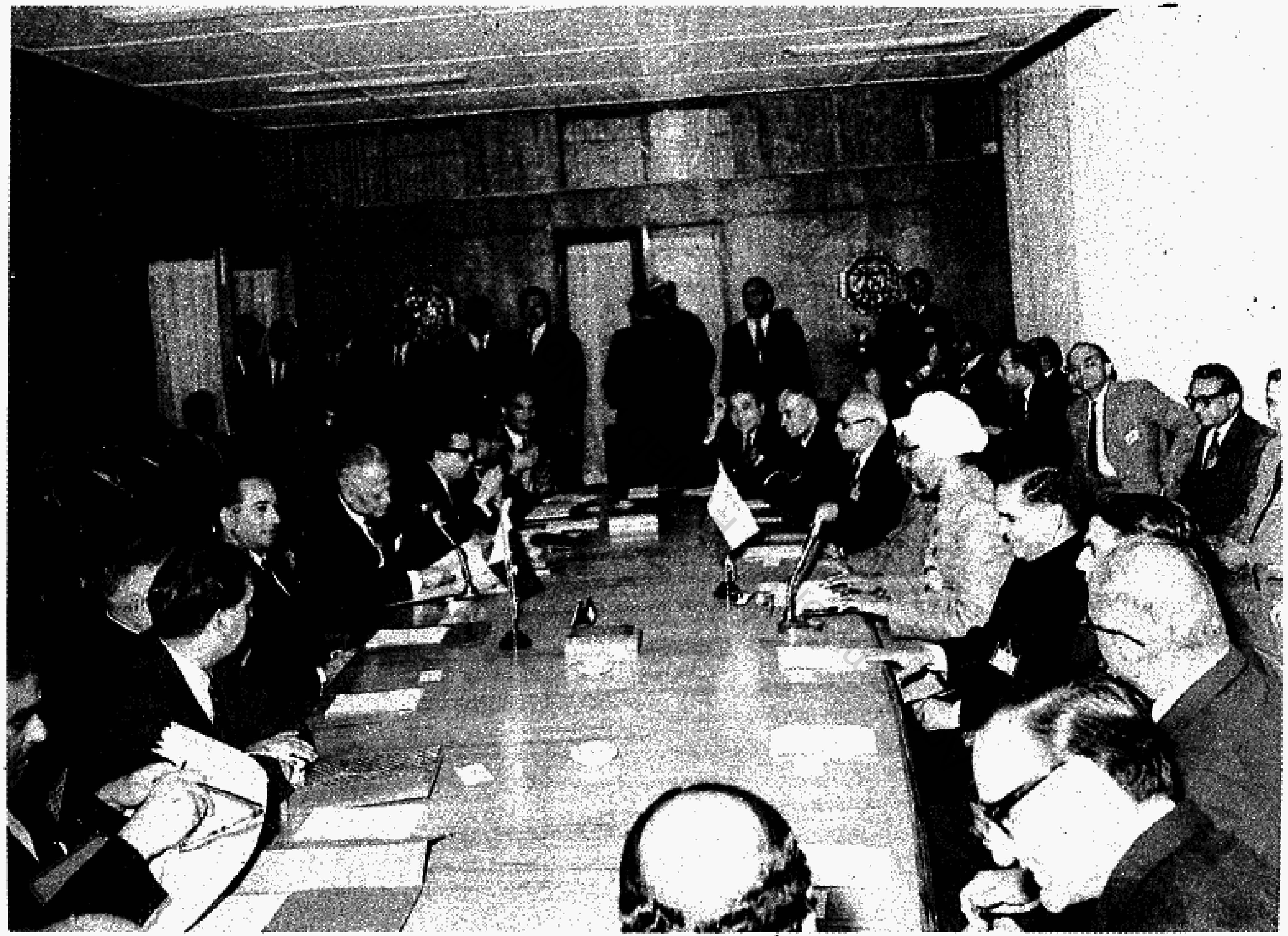
Prime Minister Kosygin, President Ayub Khan, Sardar Swaran Singh India's Foreign Minister and Y.B. Chavan, India's Defence Minister before the signing of the Tashkent Declaration.



Prime Minister Shastri Signing the Tashkent Declaration on January 10, 1966 in the presence of his cabinet Minister, the Pakistani Foreign Minister and the representatives of the World press.



This is pall-bearers of Shastri's body at Tashkent on 7th January 1966.



Infructuous negotiations between the Ministerial delegations of India and Pakistan in Rawalpindi on 2nd March, 1966.



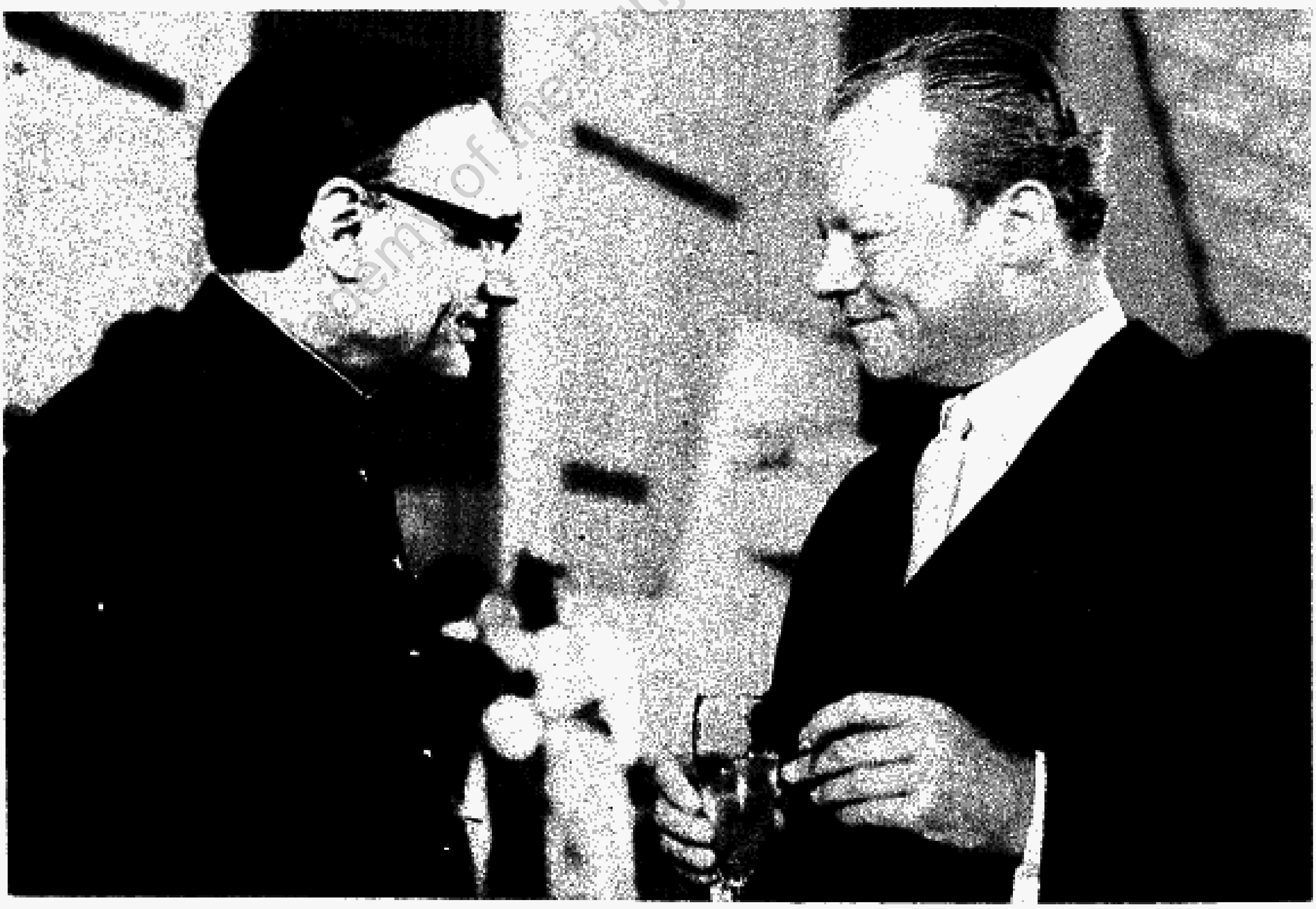
Indira Gandhi and Prime Minister Edward Heath
of the United Kingdom.



Indira Gandhi and President Nixon in Washington.



Chancellor Willy Brandt and the former Chancellor Herer Erhard at Mrs Gandhi's banquet.



The author, Ambassador Kewal Singh with Chancellor Willy Brandt at the Chancellor banquet.



President Z.A. Bhutto being received by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at Simla on his arrival for the Summit Meeting on June 28, 1972. Miss Benazir Bhutto, daughter of the President also accompanied him.



Foreign Secretary Kewal Singh meets President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to discuss ways to resolve the vast humanitarian problems left over by the 1971 War.

Y.B. Chavan, Home Minister, and Foreign Secretary Kewal Singh with President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during the latter's visit to New Delhi.





Long drawn-out negotiations between the two delegations in Rawalpindi between 24th to 27th July 1973.

Pakistan Delegation: Agha Sahi, Foreign Secretary and Mr Aziz Ahmed, Minister of State
Indian Delegation: P.N. Haksar, Special envoy of Prime Minister, Kewal Singh, Foreign Secretary, Mr Chib, Joint Secretary.



Tripartite agreement signed on 19th April 1974 between the Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan resolving the question of the 195 P.o.ws. indicted for war crimes. Dr. Kamal Hussain, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Sardar Swarn Singh Foreign Minister of India, Mr Aziz Ahmed Foreign Minister of Pakistan. Standing behind are Foreign Secretary Kewal Singh, P.N. Dhar, Secretary to the Prime Minister and Ashok Chib, Joint Secretary.

the Foreign Minister elicited the same reply although I had stressed the urgency explaining that I had a personal message from my Prime Minister to be delivered to the President without delay. At about 6 p.m., Foreign Minister Bhutto returned the call stating that the President, who was too busy, had asked him to see me and that he would be happy to meet me within an hour either at the hotel or at his residence. At 7 p.m., I reached Bhutto's residence and was received by his aide, Kaiser After brief preliminary remarks, I told Bhutto that I had been asked by my Prime Minister to lodge a strong protest against the aggressive venture launched by the Pakistan Government by sending into Indian territory, across the cease-fire line, well-armed and well-trained guerrillas to create violence and disturbances and to provoke anti-Government revolt. My Government, I told him, would take the strongest measures to deal with this threat and already the infiltrators were being rounded up and were being killed in skirmishes. Unless the Pakistan Government put an immediate stop to further infiltrations, the Government of India would be forced to undertake stern retaliatory action against the invaders which could have grave consequences for Indo-Pak relations and the responsibility for that would lie squarely with the Pakistani leaders.

Bhutto had apparently been under great strain for the past few days. The whole venture, as I was to learn later, was the brainchild of Bhutto and some of his army friends and the Foreign Minister naturally felt that his personal prestige and credibility were at stake. For that reason, the news from the Kashmir front must have had an unsettling effect. He reacted very sharply to my remarks and said that it was absurd to point a finger at Pakistan when what was happening was an open revolt by the people of Kashmir against "India's military occupation." The violence, the sabotage and the disturbances that I was talking about were the protests of the Kashmiri people who wanted to see an end to the Indian domination. Bhutto became even more indignant and rude when it was pointed out that the people of Jammu and Kashmir, unlike the Kashmiris in the Pakistan-occupied territory, were equal partners in the Indian nation's life, had had their own Constituent Assembly and had at that time their freely elected Assembly and Council of Ministers and that it was the Kashmir people who were reporting against and apprehending the Pakistani infiltrators. The meeting ended on a harsh and unconciliatory note. The guerrilla attacks having been launched after a great deal of planning and training, the operation needed to be pursued vigorously despite initial shocks given by the Kashmiri people and the Indian security forces.

Before leaving, I requested him again to convey the message of Prime Minister Shastri to President Ayub, explaining the gravity of the situation created by the Pakistani infiltrators, and the serious consequences it was bound to create for Indo-Pakistan relations. Bhutto promised to do so while reiterating that it was the Kashmiri people who had launched their liberation struggle and it was for India to face the consequences. He need not remind me, he added, that Pakistan's sympathies were with the people of Kashmir in their struggle.

Incidentally, the newspaper *Dawn* reported that I had met Bhutto at short notice and that the purpose of the visit could not be ascertained.

The next day in a press statement, Bhutto again rejected the Indian protest and stated that by "no stretch of the imagination can the blame for whatever is happening in Kashmir be put on Pakistan" and that it was the spontaneous uprising of the people of Kashmir. Characteristically, going off on a tangent, he even alleged that India was threatening to attack Pakistan "in retaliation for the uprising in the India-held Kashmir." He continued, "India must know that Pakistan does not stand alone. She has the support of all the freedom-loving people of the world and the Afro-Asian countries."

Despite Bhutto's vehement disclaimers, the dispatches from Delhi during the next three days brought mounting evidence of a well-planned operation launched by the Pakistan Government with the objective of fomenting disorder and revolt in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Several hundreds of well-trained and well-armed Pakistani guerrillas had crossed the cease-fire line at various points and were indulging in violence, arson and sabotage and were inciting people to rebel against their Government. The local inhabitants were promptly reporting the movements of these suspicious people to the security forces who were tracking them down. In the clashes near Srinagar, in the Chhamb sector and in other places more than 100 raiders were killed in the first five days and scores of them had been arrested. It was established beyond doubt that most of the raiders belonged to the Pakistan army and were well-equipped with Sten guns, rifles and explosives. On arrest, they confessed and gave information about the stockpiles of the arms and ammunition they had smuggled into the valley.

In spite of the large number of arrests and casualties among the infiltrators and their getting no cooperation from the local people, the press and the radio in Pakistan announced daily progress of the so-called fast spreading revolt of the people of Kashmir against the Indian Government and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. In the first

few days, it became obvious that the publicity had been prepared in Pakistan several weeks in advance, and these daily handouts given in advance by the Pakistan authorities were published giving accounts of a revolution that did not actually exist.

On August 9, within barely four days of the first infiltrations, the reports in Pakistan were embellished with the news that a Revolutionary Council of the people of Kashmir had been set up and that from some secret broadcasting station, "Voice of Kashmir," the Revolutionary Council was exhorting the people not to pay taxes, advising the civil servants to quit and warning the collaborators that they would be shot. The next day, the Pakistan press announced the establishment of a National Government of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and that posters on the walls in Srinagar and other towns proclaimed the decrees of the Revolutionary Government. As a result, according to these reports, the law and order was breaking down, there was widespread opposition to Government and there were clashes in Srinagar.

The same evening, we heard from India that the Chief Minister of Kashmir, G.M. Sadiq, had announced that there was absolute peace in Srinagar and other towns, the raiders were being hounded and that the people of Kashmir were determined to meet this threat from the Pakistani guerrillas. Mrs. Gandhi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, who was visiting Srinagar, spoke about the peace and calm among the people and referred to the heavy casualties that were being inflicted by the Indian security forces on the Pakistani infiltrators in various parts of Kashmir. Further news from India indicated that the same day thousands of Muslims attended the Urs of Mir Dastbir and that the tourists were all over the city as usual.

Understandably, the news from the Indian and the Pakistani press in the following days completely contradicted each other and caused considerable anxiety to our Mission in this hostile atmosphere. Very soon, however, the reports from the world press started confirming that the guerrilla operations launched by Pakistan were being dealt a severe blow. Some of the captured raiders including Pakistani military officers had been flown to Delhi where they confessed about the Pakistan Government having trained and armed them to create disorder and disturbance and to blow up military installations and communications in the Indian territory. The so-called Revolutionary Council, according to the foreign press, did not exist and the "Voice of Kashmir" radio station was broadcasting from somewhere near Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. These reports also confirmed that the Kashmiri people, having bitter memories of the 1947

invasion of the tribals from Pakistan, had proved vigilant and that the security forces were inflicting heavy casualties.

My talks with some Ambassadors and other friends and the assessments of my colleagues in the High Commission gave me fairly detailed ideas of the background of this large-scale invasion and the brains behind it.

Since May 1965, some Pakistani military personnel, soldiers of the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and the civilians called "Mujahideen" had been given intensive training in guerrilla warfare at the Headquarters at Murree under the command of General Akhtar Hussain Malik. It was often mentioned to me that Foreign Minister Bhutto and some of his colleagues and two or three top army officers, inspired by Mao Tse-tung's guerrilla tactics and the Algerian type of guerrilla warfare, were the authors of this operation to be called "Operation Gibraltar." President Ayub was won over to this plot and fully approved it.

My attention was also drawn to some emergency ordinances promulgated two months earlier relating to the recall of the reservists and the raising of the Mujahid Force of more than 100,000 men to wage Jehad or a religious war. The major force to launch the guerrilla warfare was to be the highly trained "Gibraltar Force" of ten brigades of 3,000 men in each brigade operating under a regular army commander. Later reports from India based on the interrogation of the captured invaders fully confirmed what was current information among the diplomats. The infiltrators freely admitted to the Indian authorities that they had been given training in Murree since the first week of May under the command of Major-General Akhtar Hussain Malik, GOC 12th Division, with headquarters at Murree. In the middle of July, according to the statements of the captured invaders, President Ayub had addressed the force commanders before the launching of the "Operation Gibraltar."

The plan was to send several thousands of these highly trained guerrilla invaders across the cease-fire line to attack Indian army headquarters, destroy supply and ammunition depots, cut off communication lines, and waylay convoys and troops. They were also to take with them vast amounts of literature inciting the Kashmiris to launch a revolution against their Government and the Indian authorities. It was hoped that by their acts of sabotage, arson and murders, they would be able to incite some sort of a revolt by the Kashmiris in a few days, when a "Revolutionary Council" would be set up consisting of some dissidents and Pakistani agents and supported by large armed units of Pakistani soldiers and Azad Kashmir forces in civilian clothes calling themselves as "Freedom Fighters." Once a provisional

government had been set up and armed resistance to the Indian authorities started, Pakistan would be able to interfere openly with a massive attack purporting to do so on a frantic appeal by the Provisional Government. This, the perpetrators of the guerrilla invasion hoped, would help them in internationalizing the Kashmir issue which would give Pakistan some kind of say in the administration of the state and its future.

This was a highly ambitious plan which had some chance of success only if a much larger number of Pakistani regular soldiers were to be inducted into the operation even in civilian clothes. Perhaps, the intention was to send up to 20,000 Pakistani soldiers called Kashmiri freedom fighters to support the guerrillas as soon as there was some success in fomenting revolt in the valley.

This scatterbrained conspiracy utterly failed to take into account that the Kashmiri people would strongly resist the Pakistani raiders. In Kashmir, they had a democratically elected Government based on adult suffrage, and not on a small number of Basic Democrats as in Pakistan. These elections had taken place in a free atmosphere watched by the local and foreign press and the Government of Kashmir would never have tolerated an intrusion from Pakistan's dictatorship. Besides, the Indian army was vigilant enough to be able to detect within a few days, if not immediately, the large-scale infiltrations across the cease-fire line, and deal them a crushing blow. In fact, it was an act of cruelty and deception to the raiders, as some of them pleaded after their capture, to encourage them to think that the people of Kashmir were waiting to receive and protect them.

While the efforts to cause disturbances and incite revolt in Srinagar had failed, Pakistani press and radio announced on August 11 that "the patriots" had cut off the Jammu-Srinagar road, and had blasted several bridges with the result that Srinagar was in panic and that posters in Srinagar and other towns proclaimed revolt against the Government of Kashmir and the Indian authorities. The next day, we read in the Pakistani press that Baramula Brigade Headquarters had been attacked, a whole battalion had been wiped out and that big clashes were taking place in the Chhamb sector. The news from India in those two days gave a different picture. The communications between Jammu and Srinagar and other parts of the state were normal, a few efforts at sabotage had been foiled, no Brigade Headquarters had been attacked, two companies of the infiltrators had been encircled in the Chhamb area and there were heavy casualties among the infiltrators. No posters were seen on the walls of Srinagar and other towns simply because bundles of posters and other literature had been seized from various groups of

the intruders during the preceding days. The captured officers admitted to three months' training in the "Gibraltar Force" for guerrilla warfare and that President Ayub had personally blessed the operation at a social function in Murree when all officers up to the rank of Company Commander had been presented to him.

World Press Comments and U.N. Chief Military Adviser's Report

Reports from Washington on August 12 referred to two dispatches by American correspondents exposing the falsehood of the Pakistani propaganda. A dispatch in the *Baltimore Sun* that day read: "There is no evidence visible in or near this city (Srinagar) to support reports from Pakistan of a popular uprising against India nor of repressive measures against the population." The *Sun* quoted an Indian security officer as saying that three Azad Kashmir battalions had been identified as conducting raids across the cease-fire line. The correspondent of the U.S. weekly magazine, *Time*, writing from Delhi said that 138 raiders had been killed, 83 captured and more than a thousand were reportedly trapped in Gulmarg, and added:

> Other bands surrendered after local citizens—fearful of the repetition of the fierce Pathan raids of 1947—fingered them for the police. India's contention that Pakistan had staged the raids was strengthened by the plethora of weapons and equipment captured with the raiders many of whom freely admitted Pakistani citizenship. They carried rifles, machine guns, rocket-launchers, plastic explosives. . .

Equally forthcoming in pinpointing Pakistan's responsibility for this invasion was the dispatch in the *Washington Post* from its New Delhi correspondent which read:

> Reports reaching here from a variety of sources in Srinagar and the information gained from Kashmiri and Pakistani sources during visits last week to Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Karachi leave little doubt that at least 1500 Pakistani-officered commandos have crossed the cease-fire line since August 5. They have moved in darkness, regrouping in company formations at agreed points within Indian-held territory and proceeding in preplanned missions to bomb bridges and arms depots. There is a tendency here to talk of events this week as Pakistan's Bay of Pigs.

One could see that the world press reports also implicated Pakistan squarely for sending the well-armed bands of regular army personnel and trained civilians across the cease-fire line. The photographs of the captured army officers and their statements had also received wide publicity. As a retort, on August 13, the Pakistani papers accused the Western press of swallowing the Indian propaganda line. In the first ten days, the complete failure of the infiltrators' armed attacks to terrorize and foment revolt and of their attempts to sabotage came as a shock to the Pakistani leaders. Besides, few in Pakistan and abroad believed in the propaganda about "Kashmiri uprising" and the position had become even more embarrassing with the findings of the United Nations military observers. General Nimmo, the UN Chief Military Observer also had reported that "fairly massive crossings of cease-fire line from the Pakistani side and some casualties, by no means insignificant, had taken place."

About August 10, the UN Secretary General, U Thant, expressed his concern to the Government of Pakistan over the situation created by the crossing of the cease-fire line by the infiltrators from Pakistan and appealed to the Government of India to exercise restraint in retaliatory action. He requested both parties to respect the cease-fire line. The Secretary General, much later, published the detailed report submitted to him by General Nimmo, the UN Chief Military Observer, starting with the following words:

> General Nimmo has indicated to me that the series of violations that began on August 5 were to a considerable extent, on the subsequent days, in the form of armed men, generally not in uniform, crossing the cease-fire line from the Pakistan side for the purpose of armed action on the Indian side.

There was not the slightest change in the normal functioning of our diplomatic mission nor in our relations with the Pakistani officials and non-officials. During my talks with them, none of the Ministers or officials ever spoke about the revolt of the Kashmiri people in the valley much less using the vehemence of Bhutto. They usually avoided the subject and would at most refer to the possibility of some incursions by the Kashmiris from the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir area (Azad Kashmir as they called it) to support some dissidents in the valley, always expressing the hope that the unfortunate tension would soon end. Some of them, I learnt, were totally opposed to this venture but in the face of the dominant influence of Bhutto and some senior army officers they had kept their counsel to themselves. The public,

which is apt to be easily aroused on such occasions, seemed bewildered and strangely unconcerned.

Meetings with Pakistani Leaders and Senior Officials

What continued to surprise and hearten me was the genuine goodwill and friendly feelings which I was receiving from Pakistanis at all levels. The Ministers, in spite of the hostile press propaganda, could not have been more considerate, informal and reassuring to me of their friendly feelings and cooperation. Two of them in particular, Ghulam Farouq, the Commerce Minister, and Mohammed Shoaib, the Finance Minister, whom I had known before, spoke with deep feelings about Indo-Pak relations, and were saddened by the frequent tensions. It was also obvious that public men and senior advisers who strongly felt the need for Indo-Pak friendship and cooperation could not air their views in the prevailing mood of the President, the Foreign Minister and some other confrontationists. Before I left him after my first call, Shoaib got a promise from me that I would attend the wedding reception of his son in the first week of September. I solemnly agreed having no idea that this promise in a few weeks would cause serious consternation to me and public embarrassment to this worthy gentleman.

Calls were made on other Ministers and political leaders during the first fortnight which generally left a feeling that there were many good people in high positions and because of them the situation in Kashmir would not be allowed to deteriorate into a serious conflict. One visit I recall with particular pleasure was that on Chaudhari Fazal Elahi, Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. We had known each other since the early 1940s and at my wedding on May 11, 1942, he gave a banquet in our honour in his district town, Gujrat, and made several other gestures of kindness and hospitality. We met like long lost friends. We spoke generally about the situation and our distress at the tension. He would not apportion blame both because of his sense of patriotism and his courtesy for me. But he said: "If the situation deteriorates and a conflict takes place, both Governments will have to regret deeply the resulting death and destruction; neither of them will be able to derive any satisfaction after it is over, and it will deal another severe blow to the hopes of the peoples on both sides for friendship and cooperation."

One other visit for some reason did not materialize though I made several requests to the Protocol Department. That was to see my friend Nawab of Kalabagh Malik Amir Khan, Governor of West Pakistan, whom I had known as a warmhearted and outspoken person, admired during our college days for his genial disposition and generous

hospitality. Perhaps, the Foreign Office had its reasons to avoid our meeting.

On one occasion, the intelligence service foiled a meeting. This well-known leader from Lahore and his wife had been our close friends for many years before 1947. He had occupied a high political office and, though then in opposition, enjoyed considerable prestige in political and cultural circles. When they visited Karachi and telephoned me, I suggested lunch at our place, which he accepted. The same evening, to my surprise, his servant brought a message to say that our conversation had been intercepted by the intelligence people and that it would not be advisable for him to keep the luncheon engagement.

The effective vigilance and stern handling by the intelligence service of those who could cause the slightest embarrassment to the regime was well-known to the Pakistanis. This secret service was according to some reports, organized with the help of the CIA and had earned the reputation of being thoroughly competent and implacable.

Some Pakistani friends lamented in whispers this omnipresent agency with its imposition of silence and fear, but on one occasion I respected the manner in which the message was conveyed to me. My talk with A.K.Brohi, a leading personality of Karachi—an attorney and a writer of eminence and the last High Commissioner of Pakistan to India—had been unusually heartwarming. The words came from the independence of his spirit and the wisdom of his human philosophy. He was one of the most popular Pakistani High Commissioners to India; the other, in my view, was Raja Ghazanfar Ali, immediately after India's partition. They both genuinely believed that the community of interests between India and Pakistan and the enormous fund of goodwill between the two peoples far outweighed the grievances and the irritants so much exaggerated for political reasons. They made friends in India at the highest level and believed in conveying their objective assessments and constructive advice rather than sending dispatches supporting the prejudices and the warped judgements of the Foreign Office and the President.

That evening Brohi talked of his stay in Delhi, a number of strong friendships he developed, his conversations with President Radhakrishnan and Prime Minister Nehru, and his criticism of some of the Pakistan Government's judgements and policies. He said that the time came when he found he could not accept President Ayub's directions, which were patently wrong. He, therefore, resigned the Delhi assignment and came straight to Karachi without going to Rawalpindi to see the President, nor had he done so since then. We talked of philosophy, literature, of Iqbal and Goethe and of Dr.

Radhakrishnan's writings, especially his *Eastern Religion and Western Thought*.

When parting at the gate he said: "Remember, you are always most welcome to this home. Secret agents hover around all over this city but nothing can stop our meetings. And whenever you invite me to the High Commission, I shall always respond positively whether or not it pleases some authorities."

Political changes could not wipe away the friendships that I had cultivated with the seniormost civil servants of Pakistan in the pre-partition years. At the personal level I could count on the same affection and regard from them and their families as in the old days, and in official matters, maximum understanding and cooperation. Among these were Fida Hassan, the Defence Secretary, Agha Hamid, the Cabinet Secretary, Bashir Qureishi, the Chief Secretary to West Pakistan Government; M.H. Sufi, Agha Riza and Ghias-ud Din Ahmad were the other friends who were Senior Secretaries of the Pakistan Government.

According to the reports from New Delhi, the armed infiltrators in the following days continued to cross in small batches from various points all along the cease-fire line to reassemble at fixed spots before launching their violent activities. They attacked police stations, burnt houses and killed villagers who did not collaborate with them. In this atmosphere, Prime Minister Shastri made a broadcast to the nation on August 13 in which he said:

> There is no doubt that this is a thinly disguised armed attack on our country organized by Pakistan and it has been met as such . . . The world will recall that Pakistan created a similar situation in 1947, and then also she initially pleaded innocence. Later, she had to admit that her regular forces were involved in the fighting.

He pointed out that all talk of a revolt or a "Revolutionary Council" in Kashmir was blatantly untrue and that the people of Jammu and Kashmir had given the lie to the Pakistani propaganda. He concluded, "I want to state categorically that force will be met with force and aggression against us will never be allowed to succeed."

President Ayub the next day urged India to realize the gravity of the situation in Kashmir and to bring about an honourable settlement while there was still time to do so. Bhutto betrayed his frustration when he said:

> It was India who categorically said that there was no such thing as a Jammu and Kashmir dispute which requires a solution. Recently,

> the Indian Home Minister said in Srinagar that there is nothing to discuss and nothing to debate. India has closed all doors on a peaceful solution of Jammu and Kashmir.

It was for that reason, he argued, that the people of Jammu and Kashmir had been driven to rebellion and Pakistan's sympathies were with them.

Till August 20, some of us in the High Commission had hoped that realizing the futility of the dangerous venture, the Pakistan Government would gradually call off the operation blaming India for ruthlessly suppressing the so-called "freedom struggle" of the Kashmiri people. But by now, the situation was fast reaching a point of no return. Very high hopes had been raised by propaganda to the Pakistani public that the revolution in Kashmir was succeeding. People also knew that it was a major Pakistani thrust and they wanted it to succeed. More important, relenting at this stage would have sent crashing the top political leaders and the army generals who had, collectively, bitten off more than they could chew.

Clashes Between the Indian Army and the Infiltrators Supported by the Pakistan Army

The encounters between the Indian army and the infiltrators continued to increase in number and intensity especially in the Tithwal, Uri and Chhamb sectors. When the night raiders attacked the police post guarding a bridge on the Srinagar-Leh highway and artillery was used to bombard it with the objective of cutting off this vital road, in a counter-attack, the Indian forces occupied the three deserted Pakistani outposts on the Kargil ridge. In May 1965, too, these posts had been occupied by the Indian army after repeated cease-fire violations on this strategic point and vacated on the assurance of the United Nations that this sector would be adequately supervised by the UN military observers. Since early August, the UN observers seemed helpless in the face of the infiltrations all along the approximately 560 miles of the cease-fire line.

Pakistan intensified her activities with bigger thrusts by her armed guerrillas in Poonch, Uri and Tithwal areas accompanied by artillery firing from across the cease-fire line. The Indian Defence Ministry announced on August 26 that the Indian troops had occupied three Pakistani posts in the Tithwal area overlooking a gap between the mountains through which major incursions were taking place under the cover of the Pakistani forces. This was followed by the Indian forces crossing the cease-fire line South of Uri to control the Uri-Poonch

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bulge and occupying the Haji Pir pass where the invaders had their bases for entry into the Indian territory.

Indian forces had not only occupied some strategic positions on the Pakistani side of the cease-fire line, but the Government of Jammu and Kashmir had also announced that it was extending its civil administration to these areas. The Indian position remained that if further infiltrations stopped and the infiltration already in the Indian territory were withdrawn, the pacification along the cease-fire line could be discussed.

In an attempt to bring about a cease-fire, U Thant visited Pakistan and India in the second week of August but his efforts failed. Appeals by President Lyndon Johnson, Premier Kosygin and Prime Minister Wilson and other world leaders for cease-fire also were not heeded.

Throughout the preceding weeks, one question constantly nagged us in the Mission. Why should Pakistan have launched such a major offensive through well-trained guerrillas within days after the guns had been silenced in the Rann of Kutch and the two Governments had agreed to a peaceful solution of the boundary dispute either by direct talks or with the help of a three-man tribunal? High hopes had been raised of a more peaceful atmosphere between the two countries. Curiously enough, some responsible people including foreign diplomats said that the most compelling reason for Pakistan's intrusion in Kashmir was to rake up internationally the Kashmir issue with a bang before it was too late. As it was, the Indian position regarding the status of Kashmir as an integral part of India had already become inflexible after having been reinforced by the decision of the Kashmir Constituent Assembly in 1956. The recent agreement between the State Government and the Government of India to extend Articles 366 and 367 of the Indian Constitution to the state further aggravated the Pakistani leaders' frustration. The world powers, already bored stiff with the slanging matches between India and Pakistan in the Security Council, had preferred during the past ten years to forget the issue—more so since Ambassador Gunnar Jarring's report in 1959. In Pakistan those opposed to good relations between the two countries, demanded that this dormant issue must be internationalized. They hoped that by creating large-scale disturbances in various parts of the state and by setting up a Revolutionary Council of some Pakistani agents and dissidents, secretly supported by a large number of Pakistani military personnel with highly sophisticated weapons, the Kashmir question could be brought to the centre of the international stage. If in the process of the guerrilla war, some territory could be occupied by the Pakistani army posing as Azad Kashmir forces, it

would further strengthen Pakistan's position to demand international intervention in Kashmir.

If India agreed to an international tribunal after the war in the Rann of Kutch, could not she be forced to accept international intervention after a serious conflict in Kashmir? Thus, the Kutch agreement which brought about peace in one area, provided a strong encouragement for aggression in Kashmir ignoring that the Rann of Kutch was a boundary demarcation dispute for which the two Governments had even previously agreed to a decision by an impartial tribunal.

These Pakistani hopes of forcing a similar solution on Kashmir were supported by the speeches of Ministers Khwaja Shahabud-Din and Bhutto. It was not the hoped for revolt in Kashmir but rather Pakistan's own sustained national rhetoric over the years which sparked their imagination and clouded their judgement. The crucial factor, at this juncture, proved to be that a bright and dynamic leader, Bhutto, believing in confrontation with India, could exercise influence on Ayub against the President's own better judgement. Another strong reason advanced for this timing was the belief that any delay would erode the military advantage which Pakistan felt she had over India because of the immense military aid Pakistan had received from America (worth $1.5 million) in the form of the most modern weapons. Since the 1962 conflict with China, India had acutely realized the urgent need to modernize her military equipment and strengthen her defence forces and was striving for these objectives.

China's Support to Pakistan

For Pakistan, a conflict, if it was considered inevitable or desirable by her, must be welcomed at this stage when Pakistan had the more modern F-86 Sabrejets, F104 star fighters and B57 attack bombers as against India's Hunters and Gnats and Canberras, though India had in addition some French Mystere IV and some six Soviet Mig fighters. In tanks also, the Pakistani leaders believed that the Indian Centurion and Stuart tanks were no match for the latest 200 Patton tanks which they had received from America.

The additional factor which greatly influenced Pakistani designs was the growing friendship with China and the open statements of the Chinese leaders of support to Pakistan as against India. Efforts had also been made to improve relations with the Soviet Union. For the Pakistani leaders, it was also reasonable to presume that in case of conflict with India, they could count on the sympathy and support of

allies like Turkey and Iran, and some other Muslim countries, especially Indonesia.

To me, what deserved serious study at this time was the possible Chinese postures and actions in the growing conflict between Pakistan and India. The Chinese leaders had naturally welcomed Pakistan's initiatives to normalize relations with China and were on their part, now determined to win over Pakistan's goodwill and confidence by promises of loans, political support and by attacking U.S.-Pak cooperation. In the first week of August, the PRC Ambassador to Pakistan announced that in addition to the previous $60 million loan, China would give interest-free loans to Pakistan to build two heavy engineering projects and support her against imperialist pressure. He decried the U.S. aid and said:

> The U.S. claims to have provided some $3 billion of aid to Pakistan so far. But very little benefit has come to Pakistan because substantial portion of that aid was taken away by the USA itself by way of high prices of the commodities supplied by them, high salaries to experts and inflated shipment rates.

He strongly criticized U.S. aid freeze, which he termed as blackmail of Pakistan at a time when she was launching her third five-year plan. He said he was confident Pakistan would never succumb to the U.S. pressure.

About the same date, similar statements were made by the Chinese Vice-Premier in Peking to a visiting Pakistani delegation. Lest Pakistani leaders hesitated about waging conflict with India, China was determined to add fuel to the fire. Knowing that any protests and threats addressed to India at this juncture would give great comfort to the Pakistani leaders and would be taken by them as the possibility of India having to face war on two fronts, China gave a note to the Indian Embassy in Peking on August 20 protesting strongly against the alleged intrusions by Indian soldiers into Chinese territory across the China-Sikkim border. The note mentioned some three or four occasions between July 3 and 23 when the alleged intrusions were supposed to have taken place, but the protest was not lodged till the end of August when it was obviously considered handy to aggravate Indo-Pak conflict by this signal to Pakistan. These intrusions were termed as Indian acts of aggression in "flagrant disregard of Chinese sovereignty." There seemed little doubt in my mind that in case of war, China would lend support to Pakistan to humiliate India, and if possible, to demonstrate to Pakistan who her real friend was especially

with the strained U.S.-Pakistan relations. India had to be prepared for Chinese pressure synchronizing with the Pakistani attack.

In the last week of August, the official communications from India almost stopped leaving us without correct information about military situation-reports and official advice.

Did the External Affairs Ministry not realize that the one Indian Foreign Mission which must be supplied the latest news and advice twice or thrice daily was their High Commission in Karachi or were the messages being intercepted by the Pakistani authorities? The latter possibility could not be ruled out as messages came by cypher telegrams through normal channels in the absence of any wireless communications between the High Commissions of the two countries and their Governments. On August 30, even air services were stopped. In consequence, my wife who had gone to Delhi to admit our daughter, Gita, in a college in Jaipur could not return on August 30 nor did an official who had gone to Delhi on special mission (which is mentioned later) and was expected to return within three days.

Visit to Rawalpindi and Finance Minister Shoaib's Reception

The capital had recently been shifted to the hilly suburbs of Islamabad (some ten miles from Rawalpindi) and all the top leaders and Government offices had shifted to Rawalpindi. The foreign Missions (and the Foreign Office) were still in Karachi, but the Government had advised them to make plans to shift their headquarters early to the new capital. Although some Missions had liaison offices in Islamabad for day-to-day contacts, the Ambassadors frequently visited Rawalpindi to keep themselves in contact with the Ministers and senior officials and for any urgent business.

While leaving for Rawalpindi on the afternoon of September 1, I was painfully aware that the tension and firing along the cease-fire line had increased during the past two days. In the absence of any news from the Ministry, one had to rely on All-India Radio and the local press. According to the Pakistani media, the Azad Kashmir forces from Pakistan—the expression was no longer "the freedom fighters" within Kashmir—were repulsing Indian attacks in Tithwal and Haji Pir pass area. President Ayub, in his broadcast on September 1, announced that war was being forced on Pakistan by India. He again alleged that the Kashmiris "had risen in open revolt" and Pakistan's sympathy and support were with these valiant fighters against Indian tyranny. Apart from this usual rhetoric, the more disturbing were his remarks that

"The exchange of desultory fire. . . has now assumed a grimmer aspect. In certain sectors, the armies of the two countries have clashed." He referred to India's reoccupation of "the three vacant posts on our side of the cease-fire line in the Kargil sector" and said that "these blatant acts of aggression, cannot and shall not be allowed to go unchallenged."

In this ominous situation, it was not considered appropriate to try to meet any Pakistani Ministers and senior officials at least for a couple of days till one had some clear idea of the situation on the Kashmir front. The talks with one Ambassador and two senior diplomats were not very cheering. One of them said:

> It has become almost impossible for Pakistan to call off the conflict without loss of face abroad and serious repercussions within the country. They have now escalated the conflict from "freedom fighters" to the "Azad Kashmir forces" (which are, in fact, Pakistani military units) and the next step would be an open admission of the deployment of Pakistani forces with the latest weapons.

This we were talking about on September 3 little knowing what was actually happening on the Kashmir front. G.L. Puri, our Liaison Officer in Islamabad, who was always well-informed with his long and friendly relations with the people in this area since pre-partition days (He was born at Lahore and his home town was in Mardan district in the NWFP) presented an equally depressing scenario. He also referred to the various reports of substantial troop movements to the North during the past week.

While there seemed little chance, I still hoped that sanity would prevail and a major showdown averted. Pakistan had little to gain through a war after her disillusionment with the much-vaunted revolution of the Kashmiri people. India, according to my assessment based on public statements of the Indian leaders, would have been satisfied if the infiltrations stopped, the guerrillas left the Indian territory and both sides respected the cease-fire line. The occupation of four or five posts by India across the cease-fire line to stop infiltrations was galling to Pakistan but once both sides agreed to respect the cease-fire line and Pakistan pledged to prevent further intrusions, some mutually acceptable arrangement could have been worked out by the United Nations Organization.

On the evening of September 3, I was told by Puri of Prime Minister Shastri's broadcast in which he dealt with the allegations made by President Ayub two days earlier. The Prime Minister said:

> We have dealt successfully with hundreds of infiltrators. As a measure of self-defence, we have had to take military action to occupy strategic posts, crossing the cease-fire line in order to blast the routes of the infiltrators. Some bands of raiders, however, are still attempting to come with the full backing of the Pakistan army. Pakistan denied responsibility of such infiltrators. The Pakistan Government has tried to create a myth, and this myth has been reiterated in President Ayub Khan's broadcast on September 1, which said that the infiltrators are freedom fighters and there was internal revolt in Kashmir. The whole world knows that there is no revolt. . .

Talking to Puri on September 3, we wondered whether it would be advisable for me to attend the wedding reception at the Rawalpindi Club for which the Finance Minister, Mohammed Shoaib had invited me two weeks earlier. Puri, being more objective, had his doubts. With the tension approaching the outbreak of war any time and the first shots having already been fired, it certainly appeared rash for the Indian High Commissioner, the representative of the enemy country, to try to mingle with some 200 members of the Pakistani elite at this reception in honour of the Finance Minister's son and his bride. But I was using all the arguments to support my own inclination. After all, I had given a solemn promise to Shoaib and the news did not indicate that the final die had been cast. Granted that both the speeches of the Pakistani President and the Indian Prime Minister were tough during the past two days, had not U Thant issued an appeal a day earlier to both Governments to respect the cease-fire line and to withdraw their forces that had crossed it? Of course, there were serious clashes on the cease-fire line between the two armies, but they could still be the "desultory" exchanges of fire. I wish I had known even a fraction of the reality on the ground that evening, but the Pakistani media hardly mentioned the all-out attack that had been launched by the Pakistan army supported by Pak air force and some 70 Patton tanks in the Chhamb area. Both because of ignorance, and goaded by personal goodwill and undue optimism, I decided in favour of the reception. As it turned out, it was a most unwise and indiscreet decision and, despite all indications to the contrary, I seemed to have been spurred by a strange impulse of willing suspension of disbelief.

Puri agreed to deliver at Shoaib's residence a Banarsi saree which my wife had sent as a wedding present for the bride; we both agreed that Puri would go in a taxi and not in the Embassy car to avoid curiosity of the secret service and possible embarrassment to the

Minister. Our precautions proved inadequate and after a few weeks this small gift became the subject of a public auction, to the chagrin of my respected friend, the Finance Minister.

As I stepped out of the car at the porch of the Rawalpindi Club for the reception, I sensed the folly of my decision. The two police officers on duty and the receptionist standing outside the entrance door, did not care to greet me and looked grim and sour. A few steps inside were Mohd. Shoaib and Begum Shoaib and Reza and Begum Reza, parents of the bride, receiving the guests. With as broad a smile as I could muster, I felicitated and offered good wishes to both the couples. To my horror, Shoaib remained glum and turned his face to the other side. Reza spoke a few words and thanked me for coming though it was obvious that my presence was most unwelcome. The war, I could sense, was on and I was the representative of the enemy country barging into the reception.

I then proceeded to the lounge where some twenty people were clustered. There were two Ministers, Altaf Hussain and Khawaja Shahabud Din, some politicians and a few senior officials, including two ICS officers, Farouqi, Chairman of the Capital Development Authority and Mirza Muzaffar Ahmad who later became Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission. I greeted all of them and sat down. Some of them responded but within minutes all except Farouqi and Ahmad pointedly sauntered away. These two tried to put me at my ease with a lively conversation, Ahmad reminiscing about some hilarious incidents of our career together, but the laughter now and then caught in our throat, we all being edgy about some possible unpleasantness by any of the guests or some untoward incident. While we were talking, a number of guests passed by through the lounge to the banquet hall and their looks and remarks were not reassuring, if not quite offensive. I decided I would beat a hasty retreat by saying to Muzaffar Ahmad that I had suddenly developed a migrainous headache and would greatly appreciate it if he could see me to my car. Before I could say anything, Farouqi stood up and holding me by the arm, invited me to walk to the next hall where dinner was waiting.

The banquet hall was full of people with four long tables laid out with sumptuous dishes. I greeted several acquaintances but they averted their faces. Other friends were scattered too far to be approached without risk of some incident. As Muzaffar Ahmad offered me a plate, I saw at the other end of the hall, Fida Hassan with his wife, Zeenat, and two daughters looking aghast at me. Fida Hassan and Zeenat had been our close friends since 1940. We had spent two years together as colleagues in Pakpattan (1944-46) where their two

daughters were born after years of waiting and prayers. Fida Hassan was now Defence Secretary. Standing there, they realized my shocking indiscretion and predicament. While Fida thought it wise not to make a move because of his official position, Zeenat and the two daughters hurriedly walked over, greeted me warmly and surrounded me as if to shield me. They took me from one table to another, insisted upon my trying various dishes while I could hardly swallow anything and talked vivaciously to me to keep up my spirits and to show the others that I was a very welcome guest. After about forty minutes, Zeenat discreetly suggested that since it might be getting late for me, they would be happy to take me to my car. The car was summoned, they waved and I heaved a long sigh of relief.

Sitting in the car, I thought about the stupidity of my decision and of the grace, courtesy and the culture of my Pakistani friends. Any official showing so much friendship and solicitude to an enemy Ambassador could get into serious trouble but Farouqi, Muzaffar Ahmad and Fida Hassan were prepared to risk it rather than display a lack of human decency out of timidity. I seriously doubt if any senior Indian officer would have had such courage. I myself, with all my goodwill for Pakistan and its High Commissioner in New Delhi, might have miserably failed to display that decency and courage.

On return to Karachi on the afternoon of September 5, we had a meeting of the senior officials of the High Commission to review the situation in the light of the Karachi press reports and talks with other diplomats. I told my colleagues that from my experience in Islamabad, the Pakistani press must be playing down what was by now a major thrust by the Pakistan army into Indian territory with heavy fighting both on the ground and in the air. Yet, reports in Karachi only spoke of artillery firing by the Pakistan side in self-defence. The complete silence from Delhi worried us. If the situation was fast drifting towards war, a number of warning signals should have come by now as is required by the War Book of any Foreign Office. During the discussions, in ignorance of how far things had already gone, some colleagues would argue that the Pakistani press propaganda was geared to persuade the public to believe that while the Kashmiri revolt was being ruthlessly crushed by the Indian army, the Azad Kashmir forces were giving a hard time to the enemy forces along the cease-fire line. This, they suggested, would prepare the public for the failure of the so-called "popular uprising" and for the acceptance of the cease-fire after a few days of propaganda of having inflicted severe losses on the Indian army. While rejecting such simplistic logic, I continued to hope that the UN Secretary General's initiatives and the appeals by other world

leaders would lead to stoppage of fighting and gradual return to the status quo of August 5.

Outbreak of War Between India and Pakistan

All the senior officers had assembled in my office at 12 o'clock on September 6, as it had been announced that President Ayub would be making a special broadcast to the nation at that hour. The President's address confirmed our worst fears. He announced the declaration of a state of emergency and said, "we are at war." "The brave Pakistani soldiers have gone forward to repel the enemy. . . Armed with an invincible spirit and a determination which never falters, they will give a crushing blow to the enemy." He informed the nation that the Indian army had attacked at the Lahore front which, he said, was a grim sequel to a chain of wilful acts of aggression which the Indian rulers had been committing during the past five months. Without referring to the well-armed infiltrators, the so-called "freedom fighters" episode, he accused India of always harbouring evil intentions against Pakistan since its inception. India, he said, was never reconciled to the establishment of an independent Pakistan where Muslims could build a homeland of their own.

So the war had started and we needed immediately to prepare for the war situation. Having had, since my arrival, grave apprehensions about the High Commission's security especially with the huge accumulation of top secret, secret and confidential records, I had recommended to the Foreign Minister that most of them should be kept in a Pakistan cell in the Ministry in New Delhi. Keeping these highly sensitive documents accumulated during the past eighteen years, which dealt with all sorts of secret discussions, proposals and reports from Karachi, New Delhi and Indian Embassies including exchanges with the Foreign Heads of Government, entailed a heavy risk. True, some of these documents were useful for reference, but they could easily be consulted in the Ministry on a short visit. The Foreign Minister readily agreed and the Deputy High Commissioner decided to send an officer with a couple of cabin trunks by each flight so that in about six weeks or two months, all the secret records would be safely in New Delhi.

The first officer to go on this errand, on August 27, was attache Bhaumik, who had urgent personal reasons also. His wife was expecting a baby in a couple of weeks and he wanted to go and bring his mother to Karachi. Unfortunately, as the air service got suspended from September 1 and the war started from September 6, he could not return for a couple of months.

As President Ayub's broadcast ended, my first suggestion was that we must destroy immediately all the secret records and cypher codes. Since the war on the Lahore front was reported to have started only that morning, we might, with some luck, be spared the hostile attention of the authorities for another 24-36 hours, since they would be too preoccupied with the military, internal security and civil defence matters. Any delay by us would, I felt certain, gravely endanger the safety of our records and thereby our national security. Some colleagues, whose advice I always valued, expressed doubts. First, such important records, some of which had no copies outside the Chancery, are destroyed only when the Foreign Office sends a final signal after preliminary warning messages. Having received no such warnings, our burning the records might turn out to be a rash and hasty act. I replied that such warnings could have been intercepted by the Pakistani authorities. They countered that in that case the Ministry had two options. One, that receiving no acknowledgement from us they could have sent such urgent messages through a friendly Embassy. (It is only after the declaration of war that, according to international convention, no other Embassy can make contact or send or receive messages on behalf of the Mission of the enemy country). The second option for the Government was that, since a couple of officers had been on duty all the time listening to All-India Radio, some messages in general terms could have been conveyed to the Mission through these broadcasts.

Counsellor Shanker Bajpai advanced a more persuasive argument: Did President Ayub's broadcast indeed mean a "declaration of war"? It is a technical prerequisite before other steps are taken to deal with the diplomatic Missions of the two countries and their properties and the personnel. Parkash Kaul, the Deputy High Commissioner, agreed to rush to the Foreign Office to seek this clarification and to confirm what steps the Government of Pakistan proposed to take for the safety of the High Commission and its personnel in accordance with the Vienna Convention.

I was getting impatient. A premonition haunted me that either a police contingent would directly invade the Chancery or a big crowd would be put on to it by the Foreign Office to attack and ransack the High Commission. The police force would then appear on the scene as if to control the situation and take away the records. And every day for the next year, our secret records would be splashed over the daily *Dawn* of Karachi under vitriolic titles.

Pending Kaul's return, Bajpai got busy planning and organizing priorities for the destruction of the records. Frank Dewars, First

Secretary, dispatched four officials in staff cars to buy six more incinerators. "Don't buy the incinerators from one shop or one locality," he advised the officials. "Go to four or five different places. You never know this might give a clue to the Pakistani intelligence."

Kaul meanwhile returned from the Foreign Office with the obvious reply: "We cannot answer these questions without reference to Islamabad and shall get in touch with the High Commission later." As it turned out, neither Government made a formal declaration of war during the conflict.

For another hour, discussion continued on the advisability of burning the records. Two officers argued persuasively that the information painstakingly accumulated over the years should not be destroyed in the first flush of anxiety. The conflict could cease in a few hours or in a day or so. Moreover, why should one presume that the first objective of the army and police would be to pounce upon the Indian High Commission to snatch away its records? There are, they said, some international conventions which are respected even during war. The cypher officer smilingly said: "Of course, if instructed, I shall burn the cypher codes in two hours, i.e., by 4:30 p.m., but I have a feeling that an hour later we shall receive some important cypher telegrams from Delhi—the first in seven days—which we shall not be able to decode."

I decided that the discussions had gone on long enough. The word was given to start immediately sorting out and burning the top secret records followed by confidential and restricted documents. The operation would continue round the clock. The cypher codes would be kept near the fireplace to be thrown into the fire in case of sudden attack on the premises but had to be burnt within 48 hours. Kaul, Bajpai and I along with other senior officers supervised this work by turns.

Equally urgent was to get all the families of the Mission to safer places within 24 hours to forestall an attack on them by an aroused mob. Frank Dewars and Amar Singh, the two bright and diligent First Secretaries got on to this job warning all families, giving them a few hours to get ready, arranging alternative accommodation for them in the main buildings, and transporting them to these places. All cumbersome belongings had to be left behind. Time permitting, we hoped to transport the more valuable items to the Chancery building a day or two later.

The Mission had three of its own main buildings apart from the Chancery: the Hindustan Court which had houses and apartments occupied by senior diplomatic officers such as DHC, Political Counsellor, two Service Attaches and four First Secretaries, Shivaji

Court where some thirty families of the junior officials had their apartments and the High Commissioner's Residence. It was decided that the Diplomatic Officers would be accommodated either in the Hindustan Court or in the High Commissioner's residence and the other families would either share accommodation in the Shivaji Court or would be put up at the Chancery.

By the afternoon of September 7, some fifteen families were shifted to the Shivaji Court and thirty families were put up at the Chancery building. Some of the officers were accommodated in the Hindustan Court and First Secretary Dharam Pasricha, his wife and their baby occupied the guest rooms at the High Commissioner's residence. The last move turned out to be quite fortunate for me as otherwise the next six weeks would have been solitary confinement for me with my family being held up in New Delhi and the High Commission gates having been closed by the army. It was a relief to be able to spend a couple of hours every day with the Pasrichas and their baby.

I visited some of the families being shifted. In every case, the neighbours were sad at their departure, but never discourteous. My misgivings, that after all the radio propaganda about India's "barbaric aggression" the Indians might have to brave some insulting remarks or some unpleasant incident, proved baseless.

All the families had been installed in safer premises by the evening of September 7. The burning of the records was over by the evening of September 8, and we were feeling greatly relieved. Shanker Bajpai, thorough as always, had a cypher telegram drafted to the Ministry, though there seemed little chance of its dispatch, informing them of the action taken by the High Commission. We sat for about an hour discussing other problems regarding some official contacts the next day if possible and about the security and welfare of the families, especially food provisions for them. The news in the Pakistani media indicated that fierce fighting was going on at two or three fronts and both sides were resorting to aerial bombardment.

Before leaving, Kaul suggested that we have a look at the various offices. We walked through every room on the four floors, opening the cupboards to make sure that everything of importance had been destroyed. One had a sinking feeling to see the 50-odd cupboards, which used to be filled with valuable documents, virtually bare. Kaul, rather cruelly remarked with a smile: "If tomorrow the hostilities cease, cypher messages start coming in and we explain *en clair* that we have destroyed everything, you know what they would think in Delhi. They would say: 'We had a bunch of nervous people in *Karachi* who burnt so much of the useful material in panic.' " The sight of the empty offices was depressing enough without Kaul rubbing it in.*

Searches by the Pakistan Police of the Chancery and the Indian Personnel and their Maltreatment

A shocking sight awaited us as our car stopped at the gate of the Hindustan Court: a contingent of armed police were guarding the gate and some police officers and men were walking on the lawns inside. At the house of Frank Dewars, First Secretary, about ten policemen and an officer, for some reason armed with guns and bayonets, were ransacking the family boxes and cupboards and throwing things all over. Mrs. Dewars and the two daughters huddled in a corner in fear. Dewars, who had just returned from the office was equally shocked. On inquiry, the police officer said they had orders from their superiors to conduct a thorough search as a secret transmitter from these buildings was sending messages to India. I tried to argue with him but he merely replied that we could talk to the Superintendent of Police who was outside. By now Kaul was livid with anger. He called out to the Superintendent, "O, Darhiwale. . . you bearded fellow, are you not ashamed of yourself for what you are doing? How dare you enter these diplomatic premises without our permission and frighten women and children in this barbaric manner? Will you and your men get out of these premises immediately!" The Superintendent smiled provocatively and said coolly that he had his orders to look for a hidden transmitter. Kaul burst out: "That is a stupid pretext to harass and insult the families of the High Commission. What the Pakistan Government is doing has not happened in the 200 years of the diplomatic history of the world. You will pay for this." I tried to calm down Kaul and asked him to contact the Foreign Office if at all possible.

When he telephoned from his house, quite unbelievably, a Protocol Officer promised to be on the scene immediately. Kaul then telephoned to the representatives of Agence France Press and the *New York Times* informing them of the developments. He was still speaking to the *New York Times* correspondent when his telephone went dead.

*My heart missed a beat when I read about what happened to the U.S. Embassy in Iran when the Revolutionary Guards took over its premises in November 1979. All the classified information had been shredded by the Embassy staff. Yet the Revolutionary Guards did a brilliant job of painstakingly patching together the shredded pages. The publication of some of this material in the next few months in the Iranian press caused considerable embarrassment to the U.S. Administration and jeopardised the safety of many highly placed Iranian officials. In the case of the American Embassy, many barriers needed to be overcome before the Revolutionary Guards got their hands on the classified material. In the case of the Indian High Commission in 1965, only a glass door kept any intruders at bay.

When the Protocol Officer arrived, Kaul, who apparently knew him, protested strongly. The officer in turn protested to the Superintendent of Police about their activity. When the latter explained that he had his orders from the higher authorities, the Protocol Officer asked to see those orders. The Superintendent of Police, whose composure was remarkable, just smiled and turned away. The Protocol Officer approached him again but this time the SP's message to him could not have been clearer. "Just vanish unless you want trouble." The Protocol Officer left us with an apology. Obviously, the lower level staff in the Foreign Office were in the dark about the decision of the higher personalities.

Exactly similar scenes were being repeated at the Shivaji Court—the siege by armed police, gun and bayonet toting policemen ransacking boxes and cupboards, the officials and their wives and children made to sit along the corridors. It seemed the whole exercise was intended to frighten and humiliate the families. So sad, so crude and so utterly meaningless. My Pakistani friends, I was convinced, would have been ashamed of this action, but those who ordered it, I was certain, did not even represent the true Pakistani culture. Their minds were poisoned by some consuming hatred.

Mrs. Bhaumik sat in a corner, forlorn and frightened, her husband stranded at New Delhi. I tried to cheer her up and promised to see her again the next day, little realizing that from this moment the gates of all our buildings would be barred by the army.

It was about 8:30 p.m. as I drove to my residence at Clifton. Seeing the soldiers surrounding the building, I asked the driver to turn left to the residence of the Ceylonese High Commissioner. The High Commissioner, General H.W.G. Wijyekoon, received me warmly. We talked of the growing conflict. I mentioned to him our destroying the records and the matter of the police searches. I suggested that he might like to send a message to his Government to be conveyed to our High Commissioner in Colombo about my talk with him. He agreed, but, as I learnt after the war, did not act upon it. I respected his decision. According to the international convention, he was being correct in not sending a message on behalf of the Mission of a country that was at war with his host Government. But we learnt after the hostilities that for the first seven days after the war broke out, two Embassies in New Delhi continued to send detailed communications to Islamabad on behalf of the Pakistan High Commission. I have often wondered whom one should admire more: those diplomats who would stand by international principles and rather let a friendly Mission down, or those who, on the contrary, would stand by a friendly Mission and rather let the principles

down. In any case, the message the Ceylonese High Commissioner was asked to convey was not to hurt any Pakistani interest but to give a situation report about the Indian Mission which we, ourselves, had no means to send.

At my residence, some two dozen soldiers stood at each gate. Some police officers had been all over the house in my absence, visiting various rooms and opening the cupboards, but apparently the inspection was perfunctory. They took away a radio set, a revolver and the visitors' book. At the Hindustan Court and Shivaji Court also radios, transistors and firearms had been taken away by the police who possibly thought these articles with the Indian diplomats were some sort of national security risk to Pakistan. In the days to come, it was the radio set we missed the most.

At my residence, the military officer had conveyed to the butler that nobody would be allowed to leave the building nor any visitors allowed in. This, I expected, would apply to all the four buildings occupied by the Indian staff and their families.

It had been a hectic and depressing day, racing against time and with the scenes of the searches and the frightened families. As I retired, I felt I had truly earned a long night's rest. Little did I know that there was still another shock in store for me that night.

At about 2:30 a.m., there was a knock at my bedroom door and the butler announced that Amar Singh, the First Secretary, was waiting downstairs. Amar Singh explained that the Chancery had been occupied by some hundred policemen and officers and that the Inspector General of Police and the Deputy Commissioner of Karachi, who were also present there, had sent him in a police jeep to bring me. The other senior officers were already present having been summoned by the Deputy Commissioner in police jeeps. They were, he added, searching the rooms, breaking open the cupboards and were going through whatever papers they could lay hands on. The members of the staff and their families sheltered in those rooms had been quite shaken by the police intrusion.

I bristled at the arrogance and stupidity of the Pakistani officers in sending for me. I asked Amar Singh to tell them that if they had anything to discuss with me, they could see me the next morning; that the only persons in Pakistan at whose request I would be available at any time of the day or night were the President, the Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary. Amar Singh got up slowly and was walking towards the police jeep, when in a flash a disturbing thought crossed my mind and I called Amar Singh back.

In case there was some trouble at the Chancery—and it could happen easily since Kaul would react strongly to anything affecting the privileges of the Diplomatic Mission or the safety and honour of the families accommodated there—and if some casualty or grave incident took place, my absence could be decried by some unkind people in India. Having a healthy respect for questions by members in the Indian Parliament, I pictured the following scene:

An M.P.: "Could the Honourable Foreign Minister please state where our High Commissioner was when this grave and fatal incident took place?"

Foreign Minister: "The High Commissioner was at his residence as he had not felt it necessary to come to the Chancery at the summons of the police chief and the Deputy Commissioner."

M.P.: "Does not the Honourable Minister think it was highly improper for the High Commissioner not to be present when our Chancery was invaded by the police and the safety and honour of our families was at stake?"

F.M.: "It was our High Commissioner's judgement not to be present."

Some Voices: "Shame! Shame!"

Another M.P. : "Is it not a fact that when at 2:30 a.m. a senior officer of the High Commission went to request the High Commissioner to come to the Chancery explaining that the police were conducting searches and harassing our families, the High Commissioner told this officer that it was none of his business to be there and that he should not be disturbed in his sleep?"

F.M. : "I have explained the position as we know it."

Speaker: "Next question, please."

The driver brought out the car and I followed the police jeep to the Chancery.

The police and civilian officers were occupying my office with our own officers assembled in one corner. The Chancery searches had been completed and the Pakistani officials appeared sullen and angry at not having been able to get hold of any secret documents. The empty cupboards had infuriated them so much that they were rude and insulting to some of the officers and the families, still demanding the mysterious wireless set that was transmitting secret messages to India.

"Why had I been asked to come?" I asked the Deputy Commissioner. He replied sheepishly that they had to conduct a search for a secret transmitter and wanted me to see that while doing their duty

they were causing no harassment or offence. I told them that they had caused enough offence and humiliation, which seemed to be the sole purpose of their invading the High Commission. As they had realized, they were too late in their criminal attempt to take away the High Commission's records. They stomped up and down the stairs a while longer before escorting us back to our residences.

The next night came another summons at about 1:30 a.m., this time from the Foreign Office: the Foreign Secretary, Aziz Ahmad, wanted to see me immediately. I followed the military jeep in my car with considerable consternation. Knowing Aziz Ahmad's aggressive mentality, I was certain that the session would be stormy. For me, however, nothing could be more futile, tactless and even dangerous than to be provoked. I kept repeating to myself that I would continue to smile even if provoked, would not lose my temper even if insulted and would argue calmly and refuse to speak if Aziz Ahmad's behaviour was obnoxious.

A Protocol Officer received me and conducted me to the Foreign Secretary's office. Military people milled around everywhere. I greeted the Foreign Secretary, and smilingly said I was happy to be with him at his request. He scowled grimmer than usual and asked me somewhat curtly to sit down. And thus began a forty-minute long session, the most unpleasant I have ever faced.

He started by shouting about the treacherous aggression launched by the "rabid Hindu leaders" who had been planning their evil designs against Pakistan for a long time. For too long had they watched the Hindu atrocities against the Muslims in India and the reign of terror in Kashmir by the Indian army. Unable to suppress the people's uprising in Kashmir, the Indian leaders had gone mad to launch aggression against Pakistan. Their day of reckoning had come. The people of Kashmir had risen up in revolt against the Indian tyranny and would no longer be suppressed. Pakistan's sympathy and support were totally with them and Pakistan had friends who would stand by the Kashmiris in their freedom struggle. . . He continued in the same vein, more aggressive than coherent and aimed more at offending than communicating.

I intervened with a smile and said: "Perhaps you read of my protest note to Mr. Bhutto some four weeks ago. I had pleaded with him that the armed raiders from Pakistan into Kashmir should be stopped forthwith as otherwise it could lead to grave consequences. As you know, the large-scale incursions continued and we have now an all-out conflict between India and Pakistan—a tragedy over which nobody can be more sad and heartbroken than I with my feelings for Pakistan."

He interrupted rudely. The world would not be deluded by the Indian lies about the infiltrators nor was he taken in by my hypocrisy about friendship for Pakistan, he said. Everybody knew that it was the people of Kashmir who had launched a war against the Indian tyranny. The Kashmiris would not rest till they gained their freedom and all the freedom-loving people were with Pakistan in their support for the people of Kashmir.

Mustering up a smile and in a few brief remarks, I tried to point out to him the facts abut the free elections in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, the functioning of a democratically elected State Assembly and the Council of Ministers in Srinagar and the determination, oft repeated, of the State Government to resolutely meet the challenge of the guerrilla invasions from the Pakistani side. Despite his loud-voiced interruptions, I hinted at the UN reports regarding the infiltrations, about the world press accounts of the Pakistani raiders and the confessions they made after their capture. The world press, I tried to point out to him, had all along continued to report about the peaceful attitude of the people all over the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

He kept up his harangue: "Having miserably failed to suppress the liberation struggle of the Kashmiris which has full Pakistani support, the Indian warmongers have launched their attacks in Sialkot and Lahore. Tell your Government that Pakistan with her friends will deliver a crushing blow to India. The Hindu fascists in New Delhi should be made to realize that instead of their evil designs to undo Pakistan, this mad venture by India will lead to its own disintegration."

Since he was repeatedly screaming about my conveying to my Government one threat or another, I again put on a smile and politely said: "Mr. Foreign Secretary, I can only solemnly assure you that there is nobody in India who would think of undoing Pakistan. Neither India nor any other power can undo Pakistan. All the same, since you want me to convey some serious warnings and threats to my Government, I shall certainly do so provided you open up my communication channels with New Delhi. Not only your messages, but I shall have to tell them a great deal more—the raid on the Chancery, the police searches of all the houses and personal possessions including my own and the police harassment and humiliation of the Indian families." This further infuriated him. He was already bitterly disappointed at the fiasco of the Chancery searches which, as I learnt later, had been ordered by him personally with the approval of the Foreign Minister and without the knowledge of the President or anybody else in the Pakistan Foreign Office. He termed my allegations as "damned lies" and added that it was India alone which could stoop so low. Another ten minutes of this

fuming and fulminations with the sole purpose of harassing, insulting and provoking me continued. By now I was feeling sick of this crude performance and suggested to the Foreign Secretary that unless he had something more worthwhile to say, I would like to take leave. Of course, there was no question of a handshake or a good-bye. The Protocol Officer, who had been the sole witness to my humiliation, stood up and conducted me to my car. He opened the door, and as I was getting in, said in a low voice: "Sir, if this is Pakistani culture, I am thoroughly ashamed of it. Please forgive me that I had to be a witness to this scene. May I also say that I felt proud of you." I was stunned. I could not believe my ears. With the full-scale war raging between India and Pakistan, and thousands dying on each side, and just after the insults heaped on me by his Foreign Secretary, how could a Pakistani officer standing by my car in the porch of the Foreign Office with soldiers teeming around, have the guts and decency to speak to me like that?

His remark, like many others from some senior officials and Ministers, could never form part of the official records or be the subject of diplomatic dispatches. The personal regard and confidence on which basis they were made had to be meticulously respected. The Protocol Officer's remark that night would also have gone down unshared with even my colleagues in the High Commission or anyone in the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, had he not revealed it himself. Seven years later in 1972 when quitting the Pakistan High Commission at New Delhi at the time of Pakistan's military action in East Pakistan, this officer made a scathing statement against the Pakistan Government's policies towards East Pakistan. In his press statement, he incidentally referred to the Chancery searches and the Foreign Secretary's insulting treatment meted out to me. Later, he came as Bangladesh's first Ambassador to Bonn and to some other European capitals. On his first courtesy visit to me in Bonn, I wondered aloud if he remembered the incident at Karachi. He remembered exactly the words he had used and again expressed shock and indignation at Aziz Ahmad's behaviour.

The weeks following my loathsome nightly encounter with Aziz Ahmad were spent in tedium and anxiety. I was completely cut off from the outside world without radio, telephone, or visitors. After four days, our butler was allowed to go out once a day, under military escort to buy foodstuffs, which relieved our anxiety about the diminishing tinned provisions.

I had no idea what was happening on the warfront and what some 300 members of the diplomatic families in Karachi were passing

through. On several nights, I would be awakened by the sound of intermittent firing and the flashes of anti-aircraft gunfire which enhanced one's anxiety as these indicated that, apart from the battles on the land frontiers, some naval and aerial clashes were also taking place around Karachi. To take my mind off the worries, I spent my time reading and briskly walked in the garden for three hours a day. The company of Dharam Pasricha and his wife and especially that of their child greatly relieved the tedium and tension of those anxious days.

Around September 28, an army officer of the rank of Brigadier, named Bajwa, arrived in a jeep to announce that I could from that day go out from the residence to the Chancery building under military escort and that it would be his duty to take me whenever I wanted to go out. Similar relaxation had been granted to other officers of the High Commission. This was a clear signal that the hostilities had stopped and a cease-fire had been agreed to.

Cease-fire and Learning of the Sad Experiences of the High Commission Personnel

After nearly four weeks of enforced seclusion, we met in the Chancery. We wanted to share our grim experiences and to exchange with each other our assessment of the situation. We learnt that in all the three main buildings where the officers and their families were confined, the police had the same evening closed the gates and had barred any outside contacts. After a couple of days, foodstuffs could be regularly purchased from the hawkers at the gates and as a result of complaints to the police, a doctor was allowed to visit serious patients but only at the gates in the presence of the police. Mrs. Bhaumik was delivered of her baby with the help of other ladies in the building but without any outside medical assistance. The crowding in the Chancery and the Shivaji Court and the utterly inadequate cooking arrangements, water supply and limited sanitary facilities added to the families' hardships. But what shocked me was to learn of the mob attack on the Chancery on September 21. At about 11 a.m. more than 200 people surrounded the Chancery building shouting objectionable and obscene slogans. An hour later, another well-organized group of about 1,000 persons arrived on the scene with truckloads of stones. They surrounded the compound and threw stones with improvised devices, smashing the doors and windows even on the fourth storey. This was followed by hurling kerosene-soaked rag balls on the building. The building escaped this barbaric attempt to burn it, but some bushes and trees in the compound were set ablaze. The mob dispersed after three hours. A

little later more people arrived with truckloads of stones and smashed whatever was left of every window and glass door of the Chancery. All day long our men, women and children huddled for safety, frightened about their fate. The Pakistani authorities permitted these attacks knowing well that this was not an unoccupied building but where about 150 persons—diplomatic officials and their wives and children—had been forced to stay under the instructions of the Pakistan Government on the plea of giving them protection. I had no words to express sympathy and respect for our people, especially the women and children, who underwent these frightening experiences with such forbearance and courage.

To my surprise, their feelings against our own Government ran very high. The senior officers and their families used rather strong language at this meeting against the Indian Foreign Office for its utter callousness towards the Indian staff and their families in the heart of enemy territory during the war. During the weeks of their incarceration, they constantly listened to the All-India Radio broadcasts—a few transistors had escaped the police searches—hoping to hear some word of sympathy or concern either directly addressed to them or reflected in the speeches of the leaders and official spokesmen. There was never any reference to their existence leave aside any anxiety about their safety or welfare. Parkash Kaul, the Deputy High Commissioner, was most critical of the senior officers of the Ministry of External Affairs and even of the top leaders for their complete lack of feeling towards their own people in Pakistan. Shanker Bajpai, always poised and calm even during tense situations, joined me in trying to soothe the feelings of the staff. We tried to explain that the raging war must have absorbed all the attention and energies of the officials and leaders directly concerned who must have been working long hours every night to meet the threat to the nation's security and integrity. Besides, the Foreign Office, overwhelmed with the daily exchanges with the foreign Governments and the United Nations would have had little time for messages to us despite the concern of the Ministry.

I could not, however, help imagining what Prime Minister Nehru's reaction would have been in such a situation. Having got some experience of his innate sense of sympathy and humaneness during my Pondicherry days, I was sure he would have not only referred on several occasions in his speeches to his anxiety and deep feeling for the officers and the staff in Pakistan but he would have also instructed the Foreign Secretary to get him regular and accurate reports about the welfare of the diplomatic staff and their families in Karachi and Dacca through friendly diplomatic Missions or by approaching the UN

representatives and the International Red Cross. Even a week without some reassuring news about the Indian diplomatic families trapped during the war would have caused him serious concern. The present Prime Minister, who with extraordinary courage and resoluteness was inspiring the political and military leaders and, indeed, the whole nation, to repel the unprovoked aggression, could understandably have had little time to think of such matters. But what seemed inexcusable was that the senior officers of the External Affairs Ministry did not display the least concern for their people in the enemy country.

When, a couple of days later a cypher telegram arrived from the Ministry, the staff were further infuriated. Kaul sent a sharp reply *en clair* to the Ministry to say that he had not been holding cypher codes to his chest when the Chancery was raided by the police. Of course, he added, the Ministry could not be expected to have the good sense and the imagination to realize or appreciate that all secret records and cypher documents had been burnt before the police raid.

As both Governments had agreed to resume the courier service, full details were sent by the next diplomatic courier explaining the maltreatment of the officers and their families by the Pakistan police, the burning of records, the ransacking of the Chancery by the Pakistan police and other horrifying experiences during the September conflict. To us, at first it seemed incredible that the Ministry and the leaders did not have the slightest inkling of the trials and torments of their staff in Karachi but on reflection this was not difficult to understand as the people in Delhi had shown complete indifference to their existence and their welfare.

On getting a full report, the only person who had the decency to write a letter of profound sympathy and appreciation to the staff and their families was Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, Minister of State in the Ministry. She admitted that they knew nothing about the horrors through which our staff and the women and children had passed till the receipt of my long telegram in the beginning of October and my letter of October 6, which she said, she had marked to the Prime Minister. She wanted me to convey her sympathy to all the members of the staff and their families and her sense of pride for the courage with which they had undergone these terrifying experiences. Our officers and their families were naturally grateful and were moved by Mrs. Menon's concern and words of warm sympathy. Mrs. Menon wrote that the Prime Minister, who was shocked to learn of their sufferings, would be personally writing to me. It was quite understandable that, with the grave situation and unrelenting pressures on his time the Prime Minister could not send the promised letter which the staff hopefully awaited. I

was again reminded of Prime Minister Nehru who, I was certain, from my three years experience in Pondicherry, would have written a long letter which would have touched the hearts of our officers and their families. It was an extraordinary experience to see how he always had the time to think of even minor details, especially the human aspects of problems, even when a major crisis was weighing on his mind.

During the next few days, I spent a few hours daily in the Chancery trying to catch up with the news of the past weeks but that was hardly possible as we could not get the old newspaper and periodicals, and our movements were still restricted from the residence to the Chancery. I called on three Ambassadors, without learning much except for their expected expressions about the futility of the war started by Pakistan and their satisfaction at the cessation of the hostilities. With tension on the frontiers and the unstable cease-fire, there could be no question of my calling on the Foreign Office or meeting any Pakistani public men. Besides, it was quite clear that I was required to restrict my movement to visiting my office.

Brigadier Bajwa, who had been posted to keep a watch on my movements would wait at the gate every morning next to the sentries on duty. As I stepped out of the reception room to get into my car, he would walk up to me, salute, walk back to his jeep and follow my car wherever I went. On return home after my day's work, he would follow the same routine of walking up to my car, giving a smart salute, and returning to his jeep without exchanging a word. Obviously conscious that the soldiers at the gate were watching him, he was being over-correct. Otherwise, I could hardly believe that any Pakistani officer, or for that matter any Indian officer, would not exchange greetings with a smile and say a few polite words before daily pursuing in his jeep an official representative of the other country. Their human impulse roused by ethnic, cultural and linguistic bonds and ever fresh memories of having lived together in villages and towns with the people now in the other country, always got the better of their protocol barriers and official interdictions.

Quite unexpectedly, on the fifth day, as I alighted from my car on return to the residence, the Brigadier walked up to me as usual and after his salute hesitated for a moment and then asked if he could come into the reception room. Having entered, he took off his hat, greeted me with folded hands and said: "Sir, my name is Bajwa and before partition we had thousands of Sikh and Hindu Bajwa families in the Punjab. Though professing different faiths, we were members of the same community and the same caste and lived, in some cases, in neighbouring villages with feelings of mutual sympathy and warm

friendship. My own family had close relations with scores of Sikh Bajwa families and used to participate in each other's social functions." With a little pause, he continued: "We would like to meet sometimes our friends now in India. I am sure they would like to visit us in Pakistan while respecting the laws of each Government. But instead, the poison of hatred and hostility is being spread between the two fraternal people who have, I am sure, goodwill and friendly feelings for each other." Moved to tears, he concluded: "I apologize for what I said but it comes from my heart and millions of people feel like this. What hurts me deeply these days is that I should be put on a duty to follow you everywhere and to keep a watch on you. Please forgive me, as I feel very ashamed about this." I said a few words appreciating his sentiments and expressing the hope that one day we would have peace and friendship between our peoples. In escorting me everywhere he was, I said, faithfully discharging his duty and I was happy that the responsibility had been given to an officer who had such friendly feelings towards India.

About October 20, I received a telegram from the Ministry to say that they proposed "recalling me for consultation"—a euphemism for a clear warning to Pakistan that I would not return to my post until Pakistan made "amends for the outrageous violations by the Pakistani Government authorities of diplomatic immunities and privileges of the Indian High Commission in Karachi." I saw little chance of any atonement with the blatantly hateful attitude of some of the top political leaders and the Army Generals in Pakistan.

Already, as I had been informed on October 5, the Government of India had lodged a strong protest with the Pakistan Government pointing out how the Pakistani authorities in the second week of September had invaded and ransacked the houses of the diplomatic personnel and the Chancery of the Mission and had inflicted indignities on the officers and their families. A similar protest was lodged by our Permanent Representative, G. Parthasarathy, with the Secretary General of the United Nations giving a detailed account of all the incidents in gross disregard of the diplomatic immunity. As was to be expected, the Pakistan Government flatly rejected India's protest and in return accused India of glaring breaches of diplomatic practices and norms of behaviour in regard to their diplomats in New Delhi.

Simultaneously with my recall, the Pakistan Government recalled its High Commissioner, Arshad Hussain in New Delhi, for normal consultations. The prevailing mistrust and hostility between the two Governments was illustrated by the fact that I was not allowed to board the plane for more than 24 hours, the Pakistan Government insisting

that its High Commissioner must be allowed to leave New Delhi before my departure from Karachi. The Indian side, I believe, similarly insisted upon my leaving Karachi first before it could agree to Arshad Hussain's departure. This ridiculous, though brief, imbroglio reminded me of an American story of the old railroad days when a railway station had a prominently displayed instruction saying: "When two trains are stopping simultaneously at the railway station neither of them shall move first until the other has already moved." In the end, both High Commissioners left for their countries simultaneously on the evening of October 25.

Return to Delhi

After returning to Delhi, I was constantly involved in calls on several Ministers, and discussions in the External Affairs Ministry and other Ministries concerned on the High Commission's assessments of and experiences in Pakistan during the past six weeks. There was also keen interest to know how I viewed the future development of the Indo-Pakistan situation which continued to be grave in spite of the cease-fire agreed under the Security Council Resolution. On the war front, there were frequent cross-firings, at times on a large scale, by the units of the two armies, in spite of the cease-fire. The withdrawal of the forces of the two sides to their pre-August 5 positions, as provided in the Security Council Resolution of September 29, had proved impossible despite the presence and the earnest efforts of the UN observers.

I could hardly presume to express any discerning judgement on the basis of my limited free movement and contacts in Karachi after the cease-fire. However, to me it seemed highly improbable that Pakistan would again venture into a conflict when the experience of the September War must have had a painfully sobering effect. Instead of Pakistan making any advance in Kashmir, at first the security forces of the Government of Kashmir and later the Indian army retaliated sternly with the result that Pakistan lost chunks of territory across the cease-fire line and in the Sialkot and Lahore sectors although she gained a small pocket in the Lahore sector and more territory in less populated areas of Rajasthan. There was, for Pakistan, also the acute problem of the displaced refugees with the approaching winter. In these circumstances, the Pakistan Government did not know how to justify the cease-fire to its own people and to explain away the total failure of the major aggression which, by now everybody knew, had been launched by it promising the liberation of Kashmir. The hawks in the

Government and the Army had no choice but to assume a tough posture and to refuse to take the inescapable steps to implement the cease-fire and withdraw the forces to the pre-August positions.

The meeting of the Security Council on October 25 proved abortive. Instead of devising steps to implement the earlier resolution about cease-fire and to bring about the withdrawal of forces, there were sharp exchanges with Bhutto insisting on discussing the internal situation in Kashmir. The President of the Security Council repeatedly cautioned restraint and reproved Bhutto for raising a subject which was not relevant to the issues under discussion. Since Bhutto persisted, the Indian delegation led by Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, staged a walkout. In tantrum, Bhutto shouted, "the Indian dogs have gone home"—a crudity to which this highly cultured gentleman often stooped when dealing with his political adversaries in Pakistan or with Indian representatives on controversial issues.

In the prevailing circumstances, the stay of the some two hundred members of the families of our diplomats in Pakistan in Karachi and Dacca seemed inadvisable. They needed a change of scene to recover from the shocks of the past two months by meeting their relatives and friends and by moving about freely far away from the scene where they had been subjected to confinement, restrictions and humiliations. The Pakistan Government agreeing, an Indian ship was sent to Karachi to bring them back and I received at Bombay with a sense of pride these women and children who had so bravely undergone the hardships, the indignities and the constant fear during the months of September and October without a word of sympathy or appreciation from the External Affairs Ministry or the Indian leaders.

In the middle of December, a message from P.N. Kaul, acting High Commissioner in Karachi, enclosing the following clipping from the *Dawn* came as a shock to me:

"Indian HC's Gift To Be Auctioned"

> Rawalpindi, November 3: A saree presented as a marriage gift by the Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan for the bride of Mr. Kamal Shoaib, son of the Central Finance Minister, Mr. Mohammad Shoaib, would be auctioned on December 15 in the District Court near the Malkhana and the money thus received will be donated towards the National Defence Fund. — PPI

My gesture of friendship could not by any stretch of imagination have been considered as a bribe to influence the Minister in any way or a hostile act towards Pakistan. Particularly galling in this episode was

the decision by a leadership, whom I regarded as men of culture and international stature, to sell this saree by public auction and to credit the sale proceeds to the Pakistan Defence Fund. How could they stoop to such a decision which could, perhaps, be expected of some petty-minded, ill-educated leaders having suddenly come to power in a remote and backward society? There was no doubt in my mind that even the intelligentsia in Pakistan would have found this antic nauseating.

For me, this news also cast a serious reflection on President Ayub's personality and independence of judgement as this decision had obviously been taken with his approval. My talks with some Ambassadors and Pakistani public men in August had convinced me that in launching the "Operation Gibraltar," he had displayed lack of courage and had readily subordinated his best judgement to the pressure exerted by Bhutto and some army officers. Despite this, I continued to entertain the belief that Ayub was an upright, self-confident, and strong leader. Could it be that I was unduly influenced by his impressive personality, his temperate views and clipped English which superficially conveyed an impression of his self-assurance, authority and decisiveness? How could he agree to this prankish advertisement? Was it due to lack of courage that instead of rebuffing the suggestion, he meekly yielded to the pressure from some belligerent individuals in his Cabinet? This trait of President Ayub's character could, I feared, be of much graver danger to Indo-Pak relations in the future and time was to confirm this assessment.

I showed this communication to the Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, Foreign Secretary C.S. Jha and other colleagues. Two days later, I sought a meeting with Prime Minister Shastri and showed the letter and the press cutting to him. Though he spoke in his usual soft manner, I could see his disgust at this reprehensible act of the Pakistani leaders. He said, "How can one hope to have a normal dialogue pledging sincerity, goodwill and cooperation when their minds are so full pettiness, rancour and hatred?" Somewhat in a lighter vein, I expressed the hope that none of our MPs would criticize me in Parliament for making, albeit indirectly, a contribution to Pakistan's Defence Fund. Shastri smiled and said I had done the right thing.

Due to complete lack of news in September and October, I was keenly interested in acquainting myself with how the conflict started and developed after the initial phase. Even about the fateful events in August, we in the High Commission had little detailed information except for the propagandist reports in the Pakistan press.

Our official documents, the UN communications, the daily reports of the foreign press and the statements and actual moves by some foreign Governments threw an interesting light on the course of events during those months. What definitely established Pakistan's aggression was the report of the Secretary General to the Security Council on September 3 which clearly pointed out that General R.H. Nimmo, Chief of the UN Observer Group,

> has indicated to me that the series of violations that began on the 5th of August were to a considerable extent in the subsequent days in the form of armed men, generally not in uniform, crossing the CFL from the Pakistani side for the purpose of armed action on the Indian side.

I recalled having lodged a strong protest against these infiltrations on August 10 under instructions from Prime Minister Shastri which Foreign Minister Bhutto had strongly rejected attributing the disturbances to the local uprising by the Kashmiris "to liberate themselves from the domination of the Indian Government." The UN observers' reports also proved that the guerrilla infiltrations were taking place all along the CFL and were not restricted to any particular area. They later reported that hundreds of raiders had captured the town of Mandi near Poonch about August 8, followed by another report confirming a heavy attack by the raiders in the Kargil sector. These guerrillas generally belonged to the Azad Kashmir infantry which was part of the Pakistan army and were well equipped with Pakistani arms and operated under the Pakistani command.

The very first report from India had informed us that on August 5 a party of infiltrators had crossed the cease-fire line in the Jammu area and had clashed with the Indian army patrol. As a result of cross firing, six Pakistanis were killed and the remaining fled to the Pakistani side. The invaders were equipped with medium machine guns, two-inch mortar, rifles and explosives. Some of the arms and ammunition and bundles of pamphlets inciting the people of Kashmir to revolt against their Government were captured during this skirmish. Then onwards, there were daily reports of attacks by the Pakistani invaders on various targets in the state of Kashmir all along the cease-fire line, sometimes deep inside the state. As I had already learnt in Karachi from the dispatches from New Delhi, there had been extensive infiltrations by the Pakistani armed bands on August 7, 8 and 9. According to the official records about 1,000 Pakistani troops had attacked an Indian post under cover of heavy firing and rocket attacks, on August 8.

To confirm India's complaints of the invasion from the Pakistani side and that the UN Secretary General was being kept informed of it from day to day, I found the following three reports of the first week by the Chief Observer of the UN Military Observers Group to the Secretary General of the UN, which were later released by him, quite revealing:

i) Incidents of 5/6 of August in the Baramula Sector on the India side. Nature: on the night of the 5/6 of August, a clash took place in the Gulmarg area between an Indian patrol and a group of armed men who, after firing at the patrol, disengaged leaving behind a quantity of arms, ammunition and equipment. Investigation: UN observers saw the abandoned materials and noted that the weapons had their markings scratched off.

ii) Incidents of 7/8 August in the Galuthi Sector on the Indian side. Nature: on the night of the 7/8 August, attacks were carried out by armed groups on two Indian battalion headquarters and eight pickets, all located three to six miles from the CFL. The raiders abandoned a quantity of arms, ammunition, equipment and leaflets calling the people of Kashmir to holy war. Investigation: UN observers confirmed that the attacks had taken place, but could not determine with certainty the identity of the raiders and in particular whether any of them had come from across the CFL, although it was presumed that they did.

iii) Incidents of 7/8 August in the Baramula Sector on the Indian side. Nature: on the night of the 7/8 of August, attacks were carried out by armed groups on five bridges, two formation headquarters and six pickets, all located between two to seventeen miles from the CFL. The raiders abandoned a quantity of arms and ammunition. Two raiders were captured by the Indian forces. Investigations: UN Observers confirmed the attacks had taken place. The casualties of the attacks seen by the observers included: thirteen Indian soldiers killed, twelve Indian soldiers wounded and one Indian policeman wounded; one raider killed and one wounded. The Observers interviewed one of the captured raiders who stated that he was a soldier of the 16th Azad Kashmir infantry battalion and that the raiding party was composed of about 300 soldiers of his battalion and 100 'mujahids' (armed civilians trained in guerrilla tactics). UN Observers noted that some of the materials said to have been abandoned by the raiders were manufactured in Pakistan.

All this time the infiltrators were secretly entering the territory of Kashmir in bands over the whole length of the cease-fire line and would immediately disperse to mix up with the local population. One of

their important targets was the capital city of Srinagar. Large quantities of arms and ammunition were brought and stored in the city in the hope of inciting revolt and civil disturbances. The actual incidents of firing, and acts of sabotage took place on August 10 and were brought under control by the security forces as a result of intensive searches and arrests of the raiders.

Apart from trying to check and chase the raiders over the whole length of the cease-fire line—in itself a formidable job—the Indian authorities were faced with the serious situation created by those Pakistani armed personnel—some 3,000 of them—who had already entered the state of Kashmir and had gone underground to indulge in sabotage, violence and civil disorder. All these raiders, though they came in civilian clothes, admitted, when captured, that they were members of the Pakistan army or Mujahideen and had been given training and supplied arms by the Pakistan authorities.

Confirming this, the report of the UN Secretary General dated September 3, 1965 said:

> I saw the Representative of Pakistan at 12:30 hours on the 9th of August and asked him to convey to his Government my very serious concern about the situation that was developing in Kashmir, involving the crossing of the CFL from the Pakistani side by numbers of armed men and their attacks on Indian military positions on the Indian side of the line, and my strong appeal that the CFL be observed. That same afternoon, I saw the Representative of India, told him of the information I had received from General Nimmo and of the demarche I had made to the Government of Pakistan, and asked him to convey to his Government my urgent appeal for restraint as regards any retaliatory action from their side.

A major offensive, confirmed by UN Observers, took place on August 15 when a large force of raiders including regular Pakistani army personnel crossed the CFL near Bhimbar into Jammu area supported by heavy artillery fire from the Pakistani side. They captured a number of posts on the Indian side which signified a new phase in the conflict, the Pakistani design being to cut off the Indian supply line to the North. The Indian forces reacted the next day, i.e., August 16 and, for the first time, crossing the cease-fire line captured the three high positions in Kargil which they had vacated the previous May on assurances from the United Nations Organization that no intrusions would be allowed through this bulge and that India's vital road link to the North from Srinagar to Leh would remain safeguarded.

The following weeks saw further escalation of the fighting along the cease-fire line. According to the UN Secretary General's report, Pakistani artillery shelled Indian troops and villages in Tithwal, Uri and Poonch areas on August 19, 26 and 28, while the Indian forces captured the Haji Pir pass, which had provided a safe route to the swarms of raiders crossing to the Indian side of the cease-fire line, and Pakistani positions in Tithwal and Uri sectors.

The Pakistan army next deployed its heavy tanks in the Bhimbar-Chhamb area with the objective of capturing Akhnoor, destroying the Chenab bridge and cutting the Indian supply line to the North-West of Kashmir. A major attack was launched on September 1 with a column of seventy tanks and with a contingent of infantry troops, preceded by heavy shelling of Indian positions. As confirmed by the UN Observers' report to the UN Secretary General, Pakistani aircraft attacked the road between Chhamb and Jaurian on September 2. The Indian side was somewhat unprepared, disbelieving even the warning of the UN observers, and the Pakistani tanks moved towards the town of Akhnoor with little resistance.

The UN Secretary General meanwhile appealed to India and Pakistan to cease hostilities with immediate effect. On September 4, General Nimmo made "an official protest and urgent request" to the Pakistani command to withdraw its troops from the Chhamb area. The Pakistani commander's reply was that they had to take action as India was occupying positions on the Pakistani side of the CFL.

On September 5, the Pakistani forces had captured the village of Jaurian and were moving close to Akhnoor. At this stage, the Indian commander received badly needed reinforcements. By now the Indian Government had become acutely aware that it was the Pakistan army—and not the so-called Azad Kashmir forces—which with its tanks and artillery had launched a major attack in a terrain highly favourable to them. This would completely cut off Kashmir from India by their capturing Akhnoor and Jammu. The alternative for India was to act immediately on other fronts to relieve the pressure in the Jammu and Akhnoor sectors.

On September 6, New Delhi officially announced that Indian troops that day crossed into West Pakistan in the Lahore sector adding: "Yesterday (i.e., September 5), Pakistan made the design crystal clear by an air raid on the Indian Air Force unit near Amritsar which was followed by two other sorties in the same area."

In reply to the UN Secretary General's appeal on September 1 to the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India to "respect the cease-fire agreement," the Indian Prime Minister on September 4

referred to the root cause of the present dangerous situation, i.e., the massive infiltration of armed personnel from the Pakistani side. He asserted that India had always stood firmly for peace but what was essential at this juncture was that

> Pakistan should undertake forthwith to stop infiltrations across the Cease-Fire Line and to withdraw the infiltrators and its armed forces from the Indian side of the Cease-Fire Line and the international frontier between Jammu and Kashmir and West Pakistan. Furthermore, we would have to be satisfied that there will be no more recurrence of such a situation.

The Secretary General in his report to the Security Council on September 3 stated that he had been "unable to obtain any assurance from Pakistan that the cease-fire agreement and the Cease-Fire Line in Kashmir would be respected henceforth or that efforts would be exerted to restore conditions to normal along that line." The Indian Government, he explained, had orally assured him that it would act with restraint and would respect the Cease-Fire Line if Pakistan agreed to do so.

President Ayub's reply of September 5 to the Secretary General said: "Your appeal seeks nothing more than a return to the status quo ante without any assurance that you and the Security Council will strive to implement the UN resolutions pertaining to the right of self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

The Security Council Resolution passed on September 4 called upon the two Governments to take immediate steps for cease-fire, to respect the Cease-Fire Line and to have all their armed personnel withdrawn to their own side of the line. Despite the Pakistani Permanent Representative's insistent demand, no reference was made to the earlier UN resolutions.

At this stage, on September 4, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Marshal Chenyi, visited Karachi to have discussions with the Pakistan Foreign Minister. India took note that the visit was intended to assure Pakistan of China's support and to convey implicitly a threat to India. Addressing a press conference, Marshal Chenyi said that China "supported the just action taken by Pakistan to repel the Indian armed provocation" in Kashmir.

From September 6, the war escalated on a much wider front. The Indian attack in the Lahore sector did not meet with much resistance as the Pakistani side was caught unawares. Both in the Lahore and Ferozepore areas, some vital posts were captured after advancing about

12 miles. This was followed by heavy fighting on land and air attacks on each other's airfields and airbases. The Indian army launched, during the next two days, further offensives on two other fronts, namely Sialkot sector near Jammu in the North and the Barmar sector on the Rajasthan frontier. In each case, the Indian forces made advances into the Pakistani territory. The Pakistani command redeployed its forces to meet the Indian thrusts in the Sialkot, Lahore, Ferozepore and Rajasthan areas. Fierce land and air battles followed during the following weeks. According to Indian reports, the Pakistani attacks in the Lahore sector were repulsed and some further advance was made by the Indian army in the Lahore, Sialkot, and Rajasthan sectors.

The UN Security Council passed another resolution on September 6 requiring the two Governments to give immediate effect to cease-fire and to withdraw all armed personnel to the pre-August 5 positions. The Secretary General, U Thant, undertook a personal mission to Pakistan and India arriving in Rawalpindi on September 9 where he had discussions with President Ayub and Bhutto. There could be no question, they maintained, of Pakistan accepting the cease-fire unconditionally and the UN had to concurrently accept the responsibility to concede the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir by a plebiscite.

True to its vicious design and with a nefarious sense of timing, the Chinese Government lodged a strong protest on September 7 accusing the Government of India of successive violations of China's territory and sovereignty by Indian troops.

It further warned the Government of India of China's full support to Pakistan in her just struggle against Indian aggression. The *Dawn* of Karachi on September 8 published a dispatch from Peking which read: "China today condemned India for her aggression against Pakistan and solemnly warned the Indian Government that it would bear the responsibility for any consequences arising out of its criminal aggression."[1] In this case, as in several other moves at crucial times, the Chinese aim was to encourage and support the confrontationist and aggressive attitude of the Pakistani leaders. In this they succeeded.

In his talks with U Thant, the Indian Prime Minister insisted that, while cease-fire would be effective in respect of armed forces in uniform, India would have to deal continuously with the problem of the thousands of armed infiltrators who had come over from Pakistan and were actively engaged in warlike acts in the state of Jammu and

[1] *Peking Review*, September 10, 1965, p. 5.

Kashmir. After his meetings with President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri, U Thant came to the conclusion that an unconditional cease-fire was not acceptable to either party.

Meanwhile, the war continued in full fury on all fronts resulting in heavy losses of equipment and casualties of soldiers and airmen. India's crossing the Ichhogil canal at several points and capturing the town of Burki on the way to Lahore, in the face of intense artillery fire, was a major development. Similarly, India kept up pressure in the Sialkot area while Pakistan held on to the Chhamb sector and made some advances on the Rajasthan front. Pakistan, at this stage, launched its major thrust in the Kasur-Khem Karan sector on the Lahore frontier, confident of repulsing and scattering the Indian forces there with much superior Pakistani regiments of Patton tanks supported by heavy artillery. The strategy was to capture two vital points on the Grand Trunk Road leading to New Delhi, cutting off India's Western command. This was a brilliant plan, indeed.

The Indian side had flooded the area, which was covered with tall sugar cane. When the Pakistani forces launched the attack, their convoys of tanks were bogged down in the sugar cane fields and were shot at like sitting ducks. And that was the end of the great offensive.

The Pakistani forces' failure in those two weeks to blunt Indian thrusts and advance into Indian territory despite being equipped with much more sophisticated and modern weapons like the Patton tanks and F16 Sabre jets as against India's Sherman tanks and Gnat aircraft was a subject of common comment by Indian and foreign observers. The correspondent of the London *Times*, for example, reported on September 16 from New Delhi that the Indian Army and Air Force in the nine days of battle had kept up the initiative, had not suffered any serious reverses and had destroyed much of Pakistani armour and artillery.

Not to miss any opportunity, and in anticipation of the Security Council meeting, the Chinese Government handed over a threatening note to the Indian Charge d'Affaires in Peking at midnight September 16-17 accusing India of carrying on aggressive activities against China through the territory of Sikkim. The note alleged that "the Indian troops" had built a large number of military works for aggression either on the Chinese side of China-Sikkim boundary or on the boundary itself. It said:

> There are now 56 such military works—thus wantonly encroaching upon China's territory and violating her sovereignty. . . The Chinese Government now demands that the Indian Government

dismantle all its military works. . . within three days of the delivery of the present note and immediately stop all its intrusions along the Sino-Indian boundary and the China-Sikkim boundary, return the kidnapped Chinese border inhabitants and the seized livestock and pledge to refrain from any more harassing raids across the boundary. Otherwise, the Indian Government must bear full responsibility for all the grave consequences arising therefrom.[2]

The Chinese note specifically referred to the Kashmir question and said:

The Chinese Government has consistently held that the Kashmir question should be settled on the basis of respect for the Kashmir people's right of self-determination, as pledged to them by India and Pakistan. This is what is meant by China's non-involvement in the dispute between India and Pakistan. But non-involvement absolutely does not mean failure to distinguish between right or wrong; it absolutely does not mean that China can approve of depriving the Kashmiri people of their right of self-determination or that she can approve of Indian aggression against Pakistan on the pretext of the Kashmir issue. So long as the Indian Government oppresses the Kashmiri people, China will not cease supporting the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self-determination. So long as the Government of India persists in its unbridled aggression against Pakistan, China will not cease supporting Pakistan in her just struggle against aggression. This stand of ours will never change however many helpers you may have such as the United States, the modern revisionists and the U.S.-controlled United Nations.[3]

Within a week of the acceptance of the cease-fire, in letters addressed to the UN Secretary General the Permanent Representatives of Pakistan and India stressed their respective countries' reservations and conditions about the withdrawal of troops to the pre-August 5 position. The letter of the Permanent Representative of Pakistan, dated September 26, stated:

. . . in our judgement, however, military disengagement should proceed concurrently with an honourable political settlement. In other words, it is imperative that we should evolve a self-executing arrangement and procedure that would ensure an honourable settle-

[2]Government of India Records, No. 95, pp. 42-4.
[3]Ibid.

ment of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute which is the basic cause of the present conflict. Without such an arrangement, it is hard to envisage an effective programme for the withdrawal of forces. Moreover, if immediate steps are not to bring about an honourable settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, *we would be faced with the real danger of resumption of hostilities which may well lead to a conflict of much greater dimensions.*

The Indian Permanent Representative's letter of September 28 stressed as a condition precedent to withdrawals a "readiness on the part of the Government of Pakistan to take effective steps to prevent crossings of the CFL from the Pakistan side by the armed men whether or not in uniform." Besides, the letter stated, it was the Government of India's understanding that withdrawal of all "armed personnel must include withdrawal of such personnel not in uniform who have crossed the cease-fire line from Pakistan since August 5." Any schedule or plan of withdrawal of Indian troops had, therefore, necessarily to be related to and coordinated and synchronized with the withdrawal of Pakistani regular forces as well as armed men not in uniform who had crossed the cease-fire line and the international border between Jammu and Kashmir and West Pakistan for both of which Pakistan had to accept full responsibility. The Indian Permanent Representative also drew attention to Prime Minister Shastri's letter of September 14 to the Secretary General in which it was firmly stated that "when, consequent upon cease-fire becoming effective, further details are considered, *we shall not agree to any disposition which will leave the door open for further infiltrations or prevent us from dealing with the infiltrations* that have taken place."

The Tashkent Meeting

Like several other world leaders, the Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin had already, on August 20, appealed to President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri to settle their dispute peacefully and followed up this appeal with his letters of September 4 and 7. Prime Minister Shastri announced on September 18 that Premier Kosygin had sent him a message offering Soviet good offices for settling the differences between India and Pakistan and four days later he announced, in the Lower House of Parliament, his acceptance of that offer. In the middle of November it was announced that President Ayub also had accepted Kosygin's proposal to have a summit meeting with Shastri in Tashkent. The meeting was scheduled for January 4, 1966.

While this announcement suddenly encouraged hopes of an Indo-Pak dialogue and some movement towards more peaceful relations between the two countries, the difficulties in the way could not be wished away. After all the propaganda about being victorious, on which the Pakistan public had been fed and the liberation of Kashmir of which they had been assured, enormous domestic difficulties would confront Ayub and Bhutto in coming to an agreement on the basis of withdrawal of forces to status quo ante bellum and in working for peace and cooperation. How could that be sold to the Pakistani public, already bitter at the loss of territories, the heavy casualties and the failure to capture Kashmir or even to internationalize the Kashmir issue?

For India, one issue which caused some concern was the question of withdrawal of her forces from the captured Haji Pir pass, Poonch-Uri, and Kargil posts. It was through these gaps that a large number of Pakistani infiltrators and soldiers had invaded Kashmir and India's physical control over these posts had effectively stopped further incursions and attacks from this route. Since control of Haji Pir pass and Kargil was of crucial importance to India's security in this area, Shastri had more than once given public assurance that he would not agree to their vacation. His commitment was not without legal basis as India had always maintained that, though these posts were under the forcible occupation of Pakistan, they legally belonged to the state of Jammu and Kashmir which was an integral part of the Union of India. But how could Shastri's commitment be reconciled with the Security Council resolution for withdrawal of forces to the pre-August 5, 1965 positions and how was the Indian delegation to resolve this dilemma?

President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri arrived in Tashkent on January 3, 1966 accompanied by senior Cabinet Ministers and top officials of their Governments. The Indian delegation included the Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, the Defence Minister Y.B. Chavan, the Foreign Secretary, C.S. Jha, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, General Kumaramangalam, L.K. Jha, Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary L.P. Singh, T.N. Kaul, our Ambassador to Moscow and other senior officials. As High Commissioner to Pakistan, I was also a member of the delegation. The composition of the delegation indicated the wide range of subjects which the Indian side hoped to discuss to establish peace and cooperation with Pakistan and for which the Foreign Secretary C.S. Jha had prepared the most thorough studies and documentation. On the Pakistani side, the inclusion of Ghulam Faruque, Minister of Commerce, and Khawaja Shahabud Din, Minister for Information, was a hopeful sign. Unlike

Bhutto, both had conveyed to me the impression of being unhappy over the tension and the conflict and had fervently hoped for early restoration of peace and goodwill between our two countries. Ghulam Faruque, in particular, always spoke warmly of his pre-partition days in India and had more than once, in confidence, bemoaned that there was little trade between India and Pakistan, the latter buying coal and iron ore, for example, from distant countries at higher prices instead of getting them next door from India much cheaper.

One could not but greatly admire the vision and the statesmanship of the Soviet Premier for taking this initiative. Premier Kosygin, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and Marshal Malinovsky received the delegations on arrival and were constantly present to ensure the comfort of the two delegations and to help the cause of peace on the subcontinent by lending their good offices, if and when desired by the visiting Heads of Government.

Kosygin had two meetings with President Ayub, each lasting one hour, and similar meetings with Shastri soon after their arrival in Tashkent. Gromyko also exchanged views with the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan. The purpose of these meetings was to help establish personal rapport between the two visiting leaders by explaining their views to each other and to work out procedural matters.

The Indian Prime Minister was accommodated in a spacious villa in a vast complex in a green and wooded park which had at some distance a hotel, with an excellent restaurant, reserved for the Indian delegation. Another mansion, a couple of hundred metres from Shastri's residence, was reserved for the meetings of Ayub Khan and Shastri and was, during that week, referred to as the "Neutral Villa."

On the morning of January 4, Premier Kosygin, President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri met at the neutral villa and later at a luncheon given by the former. The formal inauguration of the conference took place the same day at the Tashkent Municipal Hall with a large and distinguished gathering of Soviet and Uzbek dignitaries and attended by some 300 representatives of the international press. Premier Kosygin welcomed President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri and conveyed the Soviet Government's good wishes for the success of their deliberations. He said:

> The future of Indo-Pakistan relations rests with India and Pakistan, with their readiness to demonstrate goodwill and mutual understanding and persistence in achieving positive results. On its part, the Government of the Soviet Union will in every way

promote the realization of these noble aims. We are ready to render good offices for the successful work of this meeting. . . All those for whom peace is dear are following with great attention and hope this meeting between the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India. They believe in the wise statesmanship of the leaders of Pakistan and India, they wish success to the Tashkent Meeting and peace and well being to the Indian and Pakistan peoples.

Shastri in his speech appealed for peace and goodwill between India and Pakistan and for settling differences by negotiations and not by force. He said:

> Even between countries with the best of relationships, there are differences and even disputes. The question which we both have to face is whether we should think of force as a method of solving them or whether we should decide and declare that force will never be used. The only justification for the use of force in international relations is to repel aggression. Our assurance to each other not to use force would mean, therefore, that each respects the territorial integrity of the other.

Prime Minister Shastri, as I had seen during the past two months, was genuinely convinced of and repeatedly stressed the dire need for a commitment by the two Governments to "non-use of force" or "to a no-war pact." Even on January 2, just before leaving for Tashkent, he had said: "If Ayub feels that a no-war declaration is too high sounding a phrase, I shall seek a simple assurance from him that our armies would not bear arms against one another." Some Pakistani leaders raised the cry of India having started the war to destroy Pakistan. To reassure them, Shastri added:

> We have always said, and I say it today also, that we unreservedly accept Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We have to preserve our own territorial integrity and sovereignty. Respect for each other's sovereignty is essential for peace and good relations.

President Ayub, expressing his determination to use this opportunity, provided by the Soviet Premier's great gesture of peace, in a positive and constructive manner, said:

> We have come in a spirit of cooperation. Our aim is to compose our differences with India, not to perpetuate them. We are not here to indulge in polemics. We want to eliminate tensions and to promote a

sense of confidence and security among the peoples of the two countries.

He, however, stressed, as he had already done in his communication to the UN Secretary General, that peace and no-war agreement could work only if these were adopted after taking concrete steps for resolving the basic disputes. He pointed out that he had recently made an offer in the General Assembly of the UN to sign a no-war pact after the basic problem confronting the two countries was resolved.

From next morning, the private and personal meetings of the two Heads of Government started at the Neutral Villa. We would walk with Shastri from his residence to the meeting place and about the same time President Ayub with his delegation would arrive from his residence in the town. While the Prime Minister and the President proceeded to a room reserved for their meeting without any aides, the two delegations would retire to the ante-rooms, without even an exchange of greetings, where they waited till the two Heads of Government emerged after their talks.

Breakdown of Negotiations and Soviet Role as Peacemakers

The talks of the two leaders on January 5 and a Foreign Ministers' meeting along with other senior delegates from both sides the same afternoon rudely brought home the fact that the Pakistan side's primary aim was to reopen the Kashmir issue and to place it as a basic item on the agenda, which was quite unacceptable to the Indian delegation. By insisting upon this, the Pakistani side hoped to internationalize the Kashmir question so that Pakistan and her friends could start exerting pressure on India in the United Nations. Having failed in their aggressive action the Pakistani side wanted India to concede to it at the conference table a right to question the existing status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. A clear warning on this question had been given by the Government of India during the UN Security Council meeting on October 25 when the President of the Security Council was informed in advance that India would attend the meeting strictly on the condition that there would be no discussion on matters solely within the domestic jurisdiction of India. The President, Senor Reyes, had given his assurance to the Indian delegation and had upheld it when Foreign Minister Bhutto started criticizing the administration of the Government of Kashmir.

It was preposterous on the part of the Pakistani side to expect that any Indian Prime Minister could entertain a suggestion which questioned after ten years the legal and constitutional status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India—a state which had taken the decision by a duly elected Constituent Assembly, had a strong democratic Government repeatedly chosen by the people through free elections and which had proved its determination to fight back any subversion from the Pakistani side. In his gentle but firm way, Shastri made India's position clear to President Ayub; and Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, in his meetings with Bhutto and his colleagues, disabused the Pakistani side of any idea that Kashmir could be an item on the agenda for negotiations. The Kashmir question thus became the roadblock to any further discussions.

From the Indian point of view, the post-conflict problems requiring immediate resolution in the mutual interest of the two peoples were: strict observance of the cease-fire, withdrawal of troops from the occupied territories, mutual commitment to non-use of force and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and normalization of diplomatic and economic relations and communications. With these objectives in view, a comprehensive draft treaty had already been prepared in New Delhi by the Indian Foreign Office and approved by the Prime Minister. This draft treaty promised a new era of peace, friendship and cooperation between the two nations with the promise of settling any disputes between them by peaceful negotiations. In the hope of breaking the stalemate in the talks, Shastri and his colleagues decided to send this draft for the consideration of the Pakistani President. I was entrusted with the task. I went to the guest house on the morning of January 6 where President Ayub was staying and was, in his absence, which was probably deliberate, received by his three Ministers. After a few words of greeting, I handed over the document to Bhutto who did not say a word and looked rather surly The other two Ministers politely suggested a cup of coffee which I declined.

Driving back, I had no doubt that this sort of proposal of peaceful and good-neighbourly relations would be anathema to Bhutto after his shock and bitterness at the failure of "Operation Gibraltar" which owed so much to his personal involvement in its planning and his strong persuasion on the President. Only the previous day, we had seen his implacable attitude during the talks with Sardar Swaran Singh, where he made the Kashmir question the focal point of discussion and insisted that India must renounce the present legal and constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir and settle it in accordance with Pakistan's demand

before any discussions could be held on peace, normalization of relations and mutual cooperation.

The question which came repeatedly to my mind was whether President Ayub, on studying the Indian draft, would have the necessary courage with the support of Ghulam Faruque and Shahabud Din to agree to the only sane solution for the two countries, i.e., withdrawal of forces, peace on the frontiers, good-neighbourly relations, mutual cooperation and settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiations. The alternative was constant shooting across the frontiers which could at any time escalate into full-scale war.

Within an hour of my delivering the draft treaty, the Pakistan High Commissioner, Arshad Hussain, came to see our Foreign Minister and left after delivering some communication which we learnt later was Pakistan's outright rejection of any negotiations on the basis of the Indian draft.

The breakdown of the negotiations appeared complete as the Pakistani side would not agree to any proposals for peace and normalization unless India paid the impossible price of surrendering its legal and constitutional position on Kashmir. I still doubted if President Ayub would have liked to go back without an agreement with India, which would mean continuing the policy of military confrontation. As a Field Marshal, he should have been acutely aware of the consequences for Pakistan of a further all-out war with India especially with the serious reverses during September and the heavy losses of military equipment so far. There could be little hope of achieving some semblance of a victory which could justify continuing tension and hostilities. He would, I hoped, still have the wisdom and courage to participate in a pact which would put an end to these frequent conflicts with disastrous consequences for both countries.

While meticulously refraining from any interference, the Soviet leaders kept themselves fully apprized of the trend of discussions. Premier Kosygin was constantly in touch with President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri and so was Foreign Minister Gromyko with the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan. On January 5, for instance, the two Soviet leaders together had separate meetings with President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri to understand the nature of the discussions and to find out if any progress was being made. With the Pakistani rejection of the Indian draft on January 6, the Soviet leaders were seriously concerned and Kosygin spent nearly ten hours that day in long sessions with President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri with the earnest aim of understanding the viewpoint of the two leaders and to help them bridge the gap.

Kosygin and Gromyko strove hard for the next two days to find out if there could be a common ground between the two delegations. Gromyko had long discussions with Swaran Singh and Bhutto but the latter's insistence on the precondition that the Kashmir question be reopened and the UN be involved in it, rendered it impossible to agree upon the text of the joint declaration which could promise peace and good-neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan. On January 7, President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri met for two hours without aides and their exchanges confirmed that their positions were quite irreconcilable. The talks had all but collapsed and the two delegations were hardly on speaking terms.

That evening, at the Ali Sher Nawai Theatre, the Uzbek Government put up an impressive programme of Dance and Music in honour of the two visiting Heads of Government which included some six items of Indian dances and songs performed by Uzbek boys and girls in Indian costumes, six items of Pakistani dances and songs in Pakistani costumes and some five performances of the Soviet ballet and folk dances. The programme opened with an enchanting ballet, called "friendship," by the famous "Bahor" (spring) ensemble of Uzbekistan.

This imaginative programme, with superb performances and remarkably perfect pronunciation of the Hindi songs and the Urdu ghazals was meant to show appreciation for the language and culture of the countries of the visiting Heads of Government and, if possible, to evoke for them, in the then tense atmosphere, memories of the linguistic, cultural and ethnic bonds closely linking the two delegations, and the two countries. Interspersed in the Indian and Pakistani songs, ghazals and dances were the melodies of the Ferghana valley, the Bokhara oasis and the Pamir mountains reminiscent of the age-old connections between Central Asia and South Asia.

In the auditorium, Prime Minister Kosygin along with the Soviet and Uzbek dignitaries was sitting in the middle row, the Pakistani President and his delegation were on the right across the aisle and the Indian delegation on the left row of the hosts. As the performance finished and the delegations rose to go for the buffet dinner I walked across to the Pakistani side and greeted Arshad Hussain, Pakistan's High Commissioner to India, as we always had warm personal relations. To my astonishment, he looked the other side and did not respond to my greeting. I walked out of the hall crestfallen, blaming myself for this indiscretion.

As the leaders and the delegates went into the hall for buffet, I found Arshad Hussain walking in the corridor and waving to me. When I went closer to him, he explained why he had not responded to

my greeting a little while earlier: "Didn't you see how they (meaning the Pakistani leaders) were glaring at me? My getting up and greeting you would have landed me in trouble." I suggested a meeting the next day, at least to better understand each other's position. He readily agreed and we decided to meet at 11:30 a.m. on the second floor of the supermarket just opposite the Tashkent Hotel. We then separately joined the others in the buffet hall where the Soviet hospitality was lavish but the atmosphere between the two delegations was visibly tense. I learnt later that in a few constrained exchanges that our Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary had with their Pakistani counterparts, the latter again treated the Indian proposal for peace, cooperation and bilateral settlement of disputes with disdain.

I met Arshad Hussain at the supermarket at 11:30 the next morning, each of us pretending to be shopping on his own, to respect Arshad's anxiety in case somebody watched us. Neither of us, of course, presumed that we could help in breaking the deadlock or make any worthwhile contribution to the negotiations when the top leaders had failed to find a common ground. Arshad said that his delegation wanted some specific mention to the Kashmir dispute and India's commitment to resolve it peacefully. Such a proposition, I told him, would never be accepted by any Indian Prime Minister; to pin any hopes on such a formulation would be the height of self-deception. And what was the Kashmir dispute about, I asked? After the decision of the freely elected Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir more than a decade ago, the only issue left over was the future of POK (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) which we could maintain was legally part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and must revert to it. If they insisted on mention of Kashmir, we could agree that the future of POK would be determined by peaceful negotiations. I suggested that instead of harping on the untenable and unattainable, the aim of the two Governments should be to pledge not to resort to war, but to settle all differences and disputes peacefully—including the dispute or differences on Kashmir—and to earnestly work for friendship and cooperation between the two peoples. He said he agreed in principle but something had to be done to silence the jingoistic elements.

Arshad said that their delegation had to take back some commitment on Kashmir as this question had become central to any talks after the September War which involved the future of Kashmir. He frankly stated that there were hawks who would wreck the negotiations. I pointed out to him that, ironically enough, Pakistani leaders were trying to extort in negotiations what they had failed to capture by their all-out

military aggression on Kashmir. India, I tried to assure him, would in no circumstances give up its legal and principled stand.

While we were thus talking and moving around pretending to be shopping, Warren Unna, a well-known American press correspondent, walked past us, giving us a knowing smile. Turning to Arshad, I tried to reassure him that nobody was going to tell on him to Bhutto.

After meeting Arshad Hussain, I wondered that afternoon if India should have been so touchy about the very mention of the word Kashmir in the discussions. True, the legal and constitutional status of Kashmir was incontestable and not open to question. It had also to be conceded that inscription of the Kashmir issue on the formal agenda would have carried the implication of India's willingness to discuss the status of Kashmir, which would have been rejected outright by the people of India and Kashmir. On the other hand, some informal discussions on Kashmir or some mention of the Kashmir issue was unavoidable if the Pakistan President had to sign any agreement in Tashkent. How could President Ayub and his delegation return to Pakistan even without some vague reference to Kashmir? The fury of the waves of popular resentment and wrath would have been too strong for them after the brave pledges during the past months of "liberating Kashmir" and "fulfilling Pakistan's destiny." The Indian Prime Minister could have certainly reiterated India's firm position regarding the state of Jammu and Kashmir and even referred to India's case in regard to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Besides, the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir, after the last conflict, needed discussion. Thus, some exchange of views on Kashmir was relevant and quite unavoidable to provide some face-saving formulation for the Pakistani President which alone could have brought about some amicable settlement between the two countries.

By now, there was little hope in both the camps of any resumption of negotiations in view of their totally irreconcilable positions. The delegates were thinking in terms of impending departure and the international press was reporting the collapse of the summit meeting.

The Soviet leaders were profoundly concerned about the tragic consequences of the two Heads of Government leaving Tashkent without some commitment to mutual peace and goodwill. They were genuinely worried about the grave consequences for the subcontinent with the continuing war and the danger of intervention by some foreign powers.They worked long hours every day during the next three days with complete sincerity and extraordinary diplomatic skill and patience. While being frank in their persuasions, the Soviet leaders were very mindful of the sensitivities of the Indian and Pakistani leaders and

worked with utmost patience and diplomatic skill for a better understanding between them.

On January 8 and 9, Premier Kosygin had several long sessions with President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri, and Gromyko had talks with Bhutto, Swaran Singh and other Ministers to work out a mutually acceptable joint declaration. We in the delegation, anxiously waiting for some progress, got no encouraging news during those 36 hours. Premier Kosygin's tireless efforts in spending the whole day and part of the night shuttling back and forth between the villas of President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri, trying to understand their positions and using his persuasion and friendly advice was an outstanding feat of international diplomacy. Eventually, these efforts brought the two leaders from the subcontinent closer to an understanding by the midnight of January 9-10. In regard to Kashmir, a suggestion that emerged was that this subject need not be formally on the agenda but the two Heads of Government could agree to discuss it informally. Both the leaders finally indicated receptivity to this approach.

The ironing out of differences on some words and phrases and finding formulations acceptable to each side still seemed an insurmountable task, but the sincerity of the Soviet mediatory efforts, of which both Indian and Pakistani leaders were absolutely convinced, and the courage displayed by President Ayub in accepting the only rational course of peace and cooperation between the two countries eventually led to the final agreement on the Tashkent Declaration. The next day President Ayub came for lunch at Prime Minister Shastri's villa where they finalized the text of the agreement. Those who were close to the scene spoke of the felicitous personal rapport that had developed between the two leaders and the atmosphere of cordiality that prevailed in their talks during the past two days.

Two issues which posed major difficulties need some explanation. Pakistan's, rather Bhutto's, insistence on getting the so-called Kashmir dispute, and some provision for its resolution according to Pakistani satisfaction, included in the joint declaration had no chance of success and I am sure President Ayub and his other Ministers realized it. They could not establish a right to reopen and internationalize the Kashmir issue which they had failed to achieve by open aggression. India's legal and constitutional position was firm and well known to the world for more than a decade and all efforts by Bhutto to get any commitment undermining India's legal stand were bound to fail. The Soviets knew India's position only too well and tried to convince the Pakistani delegation of the impossibility of any concession by India on this issue.

Eventually, President Ayub, presumably supported by Ghulam Faruque and Shahabud Din, agreed to the phraseology which India was willing to accept.

Briefly, the relevant Para 1 of the Tashkent Declaration stated that:

> Both sides will exert all efforts to create good-neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan in accordance with the United Nations Charter. They reaffirm their obligation under the Charter not to have recourse to force and to settle their disputes through peaceful means. They considered that the interests of peace in their region and particularly in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent and, indeed, the interests of the peoples of India and Pakistan were not served by the continuance of tension between the two countries.

The concluding sentence said that "It was against this background that Jammu and Kashmir was discussed and each of the sides set forth its respective position."

Apart from the Soviet diplomacy, credit must be given to President Ayub for finally agreeing to the wording of Para 1 which speaks of peace and goodwill between the two countries, to resolve disputes by peaceful means, stresses the avoidance of tension between the two countries and adds that *both sides explained their respective position on Jammu and Kashmir*. The agreement was honourable to both sides and promised peace and goodwill which the people of both countries longed for.

The second issue of very great concern to the Indian side was the future of the Haji Pir, Kargil, Uri-Poonch bulge and other strategic posts. While Prime Minister Shastri had publicly committed that these posts of vital security importance to India, and to which India had a legal claim, would never be vacated, the Security Council resolution, which was supported by the Soviet Government and which India had accepted, required that the forces of the two countries must withdraw to their pre-August 5 positions and the territories acquired by each country on the other side of the cease-fire line must be vacated. To Shastri it was a painful dilemma but the Soviets used all persuasion to convince him that India's refusal to withdraw from these posts would be highly untenable and could wreck the negotiations.

Even before starting from New Delhi, this grave contradiction in India's position was obvious and the only solution one could hope for was a treaty between the two Governments which would provide for abjuring the use of force by either side, agreement to withdrawal of forces to pre-war positions and commitment to mutual goodwill and

cooperation. With such a treaty, the withdrawal from Haji Pir, Kargil and the Uri-Poonch bulge could be agreed to in the larger interest of Indo-Pak friendly relations. Since Pakistan had rejected the draft treaty Shastri was now greatly troubled about this question. He wanted to be sure of the views of his delegation before taking this decision which meant his going back on his public commitment. Having received their consensus, he decided to agree to the vacation of these posts in the larger interest of building up mutual confidence and cooperation between the two countries as provided in the joint declaration and on the solemn commitment by the two Governments not to resort to force against each other.

The joint declaration, as agreed to by the two Heads of Government, was finally signed by them on January 10 at 4:30 p.m. at an impressive ceremony at the Tashkent Municipal Hall in the presence of Premier Kosygin and other Soviet and Uzbek leaders and the representatives of the world press.The signing ceremony was followed by a reception and a concert organized by the Soviet hosts before the delegations departed to their residences to prepare for departure from Tashkent early on January 11.

Sudden Death of Shastri the Man of Peace and Return to Delhi with his Body

A few of us, including Sardar Swaran Singh and Y.B. Chavan, came straight to Prime Minister Shastri's villa. During the conversation there was a sense of satisfaction that the Tashkent Declaration had at last opened an opportunity for peace and cooperation between the two countries. If Shastri was mentally troubled by his going back on his commitment not to vacate Haji Pir, Kargil, etc., there was no visible sign of it during our one-hour stay with him. He asked me when I would rejoin my diplomatic post in Pakistan—the two Heads of Government having agreed in the Declaration that the normal functioning of the diplomatic Missions of both countries would be restored and the two High Commissioners would return to their respective posts. I replied that it might take me five or six days to reach Pakistan. He wished me to be in Islamabad immediately to show the importance we attached to the Tashkent Agreement and as a proof of our desire to strengthen confidence in it.

At about midnight, I heard a loud knock at each of our doors with the announcement that the Prime Minister was taken seriously ill. The two Ministers and most of us immediately reached his villa and found his doctor and some Soviet specialists attending on him as he had

suffered a severe heart attack. Soon thereafter, we were given the stunning news that he had passed away.

Thus was this gentle and mild man, whose wisdom and courage, courtesy and humaneness we had learnt to admire in the short period that he was at the helm of India's affairs, who shared frankly his thoughts, his convictions and his doubts with us all, snatched from amidst us, suddenly. I remember the visits of Kosygin, Gromyko and President Ayub between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. to express their sorrow and sympathies. It was agreed that the body would be taken in a few hours by a special plane to New Delhi with the Indian delegation and Premier Kosygin following in the second plane.

At about 7 in the morning Prime Minister Shastri's body, placed in a gun carriage, was taken to the airport followed by a motorcade which included Kosygin and other Soviet and Uzbek leaders, Ayub and his Ministers and the Indian delegation. I was in a car with Srivastava, Secretary to the Prime Minister. All along the ten-mile route on both sides stood solemnly five or six rows of men, women, and school children in uniforms, some sobbing and in tears, paying homage to the Prime Minister of a friendly country who had passed away immediately after making a great contribution to the cause of peace. Black flags fluttered from every post amidst Indian and Pakistani flags at half mast, and soldiers with rifles stood to attention throughout the route. The solemnity, obvious sadness and discipline of this ocean of humanity, which astoundingly had gathered at a few hours' notice, is unforgettable.

At the airport, Premier Kosygin, President Ayub and our Ministers carried the coffin to the aircraft.

We reached New Delhi some four hours later where the members of Government and other political leaders and the general public received the body of the departed leader with profound shock and sorrow.

At the memorial meeting two days later, the world leaders paid high tributes to the late Shastri. Pakistan was represented by Ghulam Faruque and among the other leaders I had the occasion to meet was Hubert Humphrey, Vice-President of the U.S., whose delegation included Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Professor John Kenneth Galbraith, and Senator John Sherman Cooper. When meeting and briefly talking to Humphrey, little did I imagine that some eleven years later I would find him, in my capacity as Ambassador to Washington, a true friend of India and an invaluable support in the Senate on some of the crucial issues I discussed with him and of which he made mention in the Senate records. From Britain, the presence of Lord Louis Mountbatten representing Queen Elizabeth II, Gorge Brown,

representing the British Government and Edward Heath, as the leader of the opposition, evoked many fond memories of my meetings with them in London.

The presence of Lord Mountbatten brought to mind an earlier episode when he had expressed unusual concern and personal regard for Shastri. A few days after the announcement that the latter would be visiting London in the first week of December 1964, Lord Mountbatten called to say that he wished to visit me at the High Commission to talk about the forthcoming visit. In spite of the personal courtesy and consideration he always extended to me and keeping in view that he had not yet developed a personal rapport with the new High Commissioner, this was inappropriate protocol. But he brushed aside my suggestion to go and see him and, as agreed, we met at the High Commission a couple of days later. Lord Mountbatten expressed his happiness over the visit and took interest in the details of the programme. Then he broached the subject which, he said, had been very much on his mind. He explained that he was well aware that Shastri always wore a cotton dhoti (loin cloth) and shunned any Western style clothing. But in the extreme cold of a London December, a cotton dhoti would be poor protection. Could I, he suggested, seriously advise the Prime Minister to wear woollen trousers as the people in Delhi might fail to advise him appropriately. The same day I sent a dispatch to the External Affairs Ministry and to the Prime Minister's office conveying Lord Mountbatten's concern and advice. Three weeks later, when we received Prime Minister Shastri on a cold morning at the Heathrow Airport, he was, true to his principles, dressed in his usual cotton dhoti, though it was somewhat reassuring to see him wearing thick woollen socks.

The day after the Memorial meeting, as I took Minister Ghulam Faruque to the Palam Airport, he talked movingly of his memories of New Delhi of the pre-partition days. He repeatedly expressed the hope that the shock of the sudden death of Shastri, the man of peace, would inspire both Governments to fulfil the objectives of the Tashkent Declaration thus putting an end to the dark and destructive phase of the relations between our two peoples who felt so close to each other.

Returning from the airport, I started packing to return to my post in Pakistan.

My Return to Pakistan to Resume My Diplomatic Assignment

Urged by the late Prime Minister Shastri's advice, and anxious to study the reaction of my Pakistani friends and the general public to the Tashkent Declaration, I proceeded in a hurry to resume my duties in Islamabad leaving my family behind.

While some of the immediate impressions were favourable, there were many glaring and portentous signals which caused me serious misgivings and concern. The talks with some senior officials, a few leaders and many Pakistani friends conveyed the impression of their genuine sense of relief and high hopes at the signing of the Tashkent Declaration. In their heart of hearts, most of them were by then convinced that for Pakistan the war was almost lost and peace with some face saving was a highly desirable objective. Others, representing a fairly large stratum of the Pakistani population, in any case wanted peaceful and, if possible, friendly relations with India. Unlike some of their politicians, they were not consumed with hatred of India, and yearned for contacts and communications between the two peoples which the Tashkent Declaration promised.

As against this, there were die-hard leaders and parties with innate hostility towards India. Added to these were staunch opponents of Ayub to whom the senseless war and the Tashkent Declaration provided an excellent opportunity to arouse public indignation and resentment against the President and his policies.

Reactions to the Tashkent Declaration

Just within a week, one could sense that the situation was becoming a serious threat to Ayub's personal prestige and authority. In Lahore, for example, hostile demonstrations by the students led to rioting and pitched battles between the police and the demonstrators. The opposition leaders, the intelligentsia and the Bar Associations, in particular, were fomenting hatred against the President in all the major cities, which was posing a serious law and order problem. In particular the public emotions were strongly aroused by the processions of the "war widows" wailing through the streets of Lahore demanding back their husbands who had been sacrificed in vain through the betrayal of the President and his Government. Why, the demonstrators asked, was the war launched and heavy sacrifices made if the Pakistani President had to "sell Kashmir" and agree to status quo ante? In view of the seriousness of the situation, Section 114 had been imposed in most of the districts from Peshawar down to Hyderabad and a number of

opposition leaders had been arrested who were determined to arouse mass hostility against the President and the Tashkent Declaration.

The President, while convinced that the Declaration, in the given circumstances, was in the best interest of Pakistan, felt highly vulnerable to the strident accusation of the opponents of the "shameless surrender" on the Kashmir issue. He felt constrained to stretch the meanings of the words in the Tashkent Declaration to weather the storm though he signed it with full knowledge of India's unshakeable position on the state of Jammu and Kashmir being an integral part of India and not being subject to any negotiations. Thus compelled, he assured his people in the unscheduled broadcast on January 14 that nothing in the Declaration deflected Pakistan from her firm stand on Kashmir. The Kashmiris, he said, must exercise their rights to determine their future and Pakistan stood by that. He also promised that, after the withdrawal of forces, Pakistan would ask the UN Secretary General to resolve the dispute in accordance with the resolution of the Security Council of September 20, 1965. In fact, the Tashkent Declaration, he argued, opened the way for an "honourable and peaceful solution of the Kashmir problem" and the Pakistani people should, therefore, encourage all peaceful forces to be involved in its implementation. While, thus, giving an assurance on Kashmir, Ayub clearly stood by the Declaration and appealed for the people's support.

Two days later, Bhutto's statement from his home town, where he had gone on return from Tashkent, though supportive of the President, went even further in assuring the people that while the Declaration promised a dialogue, it was not an end in itself. "There could be no real peace without the Kashmir solution," he said. He promised the people that "their sacrifices shall not be in vain, nor shall we fail to be worthy of those, who died for us."

The opposition parties' success in organizing widespread public protests and demonstrations against the Tashkent Declaration was attributable to two reasons. First, the whole venture of liberating Kashmir, though misconceived and Quixotic, as the events proved, was presented to the nation as a great and determined national undertaking to liberation struggle from the Indian domination. This was also presented as a pledge to fulfil the destiny of Pakistan. The Tashkent Declaration, with India firmly adhering to her position on Kashmir, was to Ayub's enemies and the general public the confession or an ignominious defeat. The sentiment that the Tashkent Declaration was an insult to national honour was widely shared even by those who were otherwise relieved at the cessation of hostilities and the prospects of good relations with India.

To Bhutto, the public protests and condemnation of the Tashkent Declaration must have given real satisfaction as all this supported his strong opposition to the agreement which Ayub had signed by overruling him. As time was to show, Bhutto not only sympathized with the public agitation and anti-Government demonstrations, but actually supported and encouraged them secretly.

The second reason was even deeper and was likely to have long-term repercussions. My stay in 1965 in Pakistan had given me some idea of the bitterness and hostility against Ayub among the political leaders of the various parties and among the intellectuals. The President had no faith in democracy and treated the politicians with indifference, if not disdain. They resented being shadowed by the Pakistani intelligence agency and realized how Ayub's Basic Democracy had blocked any possibility of direct elections and active and free participation of the political parties in the national life. To them, this was a godsend to attack Ayub and to whip up public agitation against him.

From various talks with senior officials and public men, one got the impression that President Ayub was quite confident and had the means to deal with the challenges posed to his authority. All leaders loyal to him started a campaign, to assure the people of Pakistan that the Tashkent Declaration promised a new era of Indo-Pakistan friendship and was in the long-term interest of Pakistan. The Governor of West Pakistan, the Amir of Kalabagh, and that of East Pakistan, Monem Khan, became particularly active in their appeals to the public. The importance and the advantages of normalization of relations were particularly stressed in the press and in the statements of the Ministers. To project India's position, Radio Pakistan and the press pointed out how the Indian Government had promptly sent its High Commissioner to Islamabad and how India was also faced with critics of the Declaration as demonstrated by the resignation of Minister Tyagi and the critical statements by the Jan Sangh and the Samyukt Socialist party. The press gave wide publicity to Mrs. Indira Gandhi's election as Prime Minister and to her pledge to honour the Tashkent Agreement. The Director General of the Foreign Office, Alvi, specially telephoned to me to express great satisfaction at the statements made by the former acting Prime Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda and now by Mrs. Gandhi in favour of the Tashkent Declaration.

President Ayub himself launched a campaign to educate the people in favour of the Tashkent Declaration and travelled to several places to meet the public representatives for frank discussions. On January 19, he went to Lahore and addressed a meeting at the Government House

where some 150 intellectuals, editors of newspapers, lawyers and senior civil and military officers were present. He tried to explain the advantages of the Tashkent Declaration, the future of peace and cooperation that it held out and the avenue it had opened up for a solution of the Kashmir dispute. The next day he arrived in Karachi and asked me to see him at the Government House the next morning.

My Meeting with President Ayub Khan

I drove in at 8:30 a.m. when scores of cars were entering the gates bringing in leading public men, lawyers, doctors, officials and journalists to listen to the President on the Tashkent Agreement. The President, as I entered his office, greeted me with a smile and seemed in a relaxed and confident mood. He started by welcoming me back to my post and expressed his sincere regrets for the objectionable and discourteous behaviour of the police authorities towards me, my officers and their families during the September conflict. Some Pakistani officials, he said, had apparently gone berserk and he was personally very sorry for the harassment and hardships suffered by me personally and by my staff. He hoped that I would not bear those incidents in mind as we had to work together for improving our relations. He assured me that members of the High Commission would, in the future, be guaranteed every courtesy and consideration due to them and graciously suggested that in case of any difficulty I could see him personally.

While thanking him, I said it was the future of Indo-Pakistan relations which was of paramount importance and I fervently hoped that the Tashkent spirit would be a turning point in the history of our relations to make them gradually develop into a warm friendship and active cooperation in every field. The Indian Government, I assured him, was pledged to honour the Tashkent Declaration in letter and spirit and had the support of the whole nation despite some criticism here and there. I drew his attention to the very positive statement of Mrs. Indira Gandhi immediately after her election as Prime Minister.

Despite the mounting opposition against him, the President gave me the impression of being firmly committed to the Tashkent Declaration as being in the vital interest of Pakistan and for Indo-Pak relations. He said to me that we had no choice but to reverse the trend and improve our relations unless we wanted to inflict unhappiness and misery on our peoples. He talked about the enormous amount of money being spent by the two countries on defence. "What have India and Pakistan got out of it?" he asked. "We must have friendly and peaceful relations

to devote these vast funds for the welfare of our people." He said that as a result of our unfortunate relations, we were in Tashkent 10 days earlier. At other times we sought the mediation of some other countries Could we not settle our differences between ourselves instead of exposing ourselves to the ridicule of the world? All our problems, even the Kashmir question, would have to be settled one day, but that could only be done in a friendlier atmosphere.

The President referred to the opposition that was being stirred up against the Tashkent Declaration and the efforts he was making to educate the public. This agitation was due to the malevolent tactic of the discredited politicians who wanted to destroy the Tashkent spirit. They were reviving the bitter memories of our past relations and the tragic history of the past five months.

He confessed that he had signed the Declaration in Tashkent in the face of strong opposition and had been under heavy attack since then. Of the critics he always asked what other choice they could suggest. His opponents, he said, while spitting fire in public could give no rational answer in private.

I assured the President that in the implementation of the Tashkent Declaration, he could count on the full cooperation of the Government of India. A new hope, I said, had been kindled in the hearts of the millions of our peoples in both countries and nothing should be allowed to come in the way of its realization. Apropos of nothing but, perhaps, encouraged by the President's remark about how our two countries often exposed ourselves to the ridicule of the international community, I expressed the wish that soon the time should come when we would speak with one voice in international meetings after having settled in advance our differences by mutual discussions.

Another aspect in this respect, which I said had always pained me, was the way we put up rival candidates for any post in international organizations and then unabashedly denigrated each other's candidate in the foreign Chancelleries. Could we not agree between ourselves to have certain posts by rotation so that Ambassadors of both our countries jointly supported the same candidate in every Foreign Office abroad? This would enhance the prestige of both countries. Though this, as I thought later, was hardly the opportune time to raise such a far-fetched idea, the President agreed that after the normalization of our relations we should take all steps to work out a joint approach to international issues.

"What steps do we take immediately to initiate the process of normalization?" I asked the President. He referred to his last talk with the late Shastri and said that they had agreed to resume at an early date

the dialogues and discussions between the Ministers and the officials. We should quickly identify the issues to be settled and then arrange for the Ministers concerned and the senior officials to meet. He asked me to ascertain the wishes of my Prime Minister as he had already set up a working group to specify and study some outstanding problems which could be resolved by discussions without much delay. I told him I was happy to learn that, since my Prime Minister was equally anxious to quickly resolve the problems left over by the last conflict so that we could resume normal exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

At this stage, President Ayub referred to his last discussion with the late Prime Minister Shastri on the resumption of overflights by Indian and Pakistan Airlines over each other's territory to which Shastri's response, he said, had been positive. Indian Airlines used to have flights to Assam over Pakistani territory and Pakistan Airlines used to have flights over Indian territory to East Pakistan. India had, in addition, flights over Pakistan to Afghanistan and Moscow and the West. The President thought that they could be resumed without delay as they involved "no sacrifice" by either party. Humorously, he added: "No security risk is involved. We know what you have in Rajasthan and you know equally well what we have in Lahore and Rawalpindi. We should not keep up this sham any more."

Resumption of overflights, he said, would have a very favourable psychological impact on the peoples of the two countries and would arouse optimistic interest in dealing with other problems left over by the recent conflicts. He also suggested early resumption of postal and telecommunication services but I could especially appreciate his serious concern about overflights as East Pakistan had been cut off from West Pakistan for nearly two months except for emergency flights through Colombo. Any further delay put a Pakistan Government in a highly embarrassing position vis-a-vis the people of East Pakistan. He also rightly felt that the regular air services between East and West Pakistan would have a positive and electrifying effect on his efforts to promote the Tashkent Declaration. I assured the President that I fully shared his views about the immediate starting of overflights and would refer this matter to my Government the same day.

Reverting to his remarks about the Kashmir question, I said I agreed with him that in a friendlier atmosphere and if active cooperation between our peoples existed, this problem could be resolved appreciating the respective points of view. For the present, it was wiser not to agitate this issue. The President said he agreed that our first

priority should be to normalize our relations and work for goodwill and cooperation which would help in resolving all our differences.

The Kashmir problem, he dolefully remarked, often reminded him of the story of the fisherman who went to the riverside early one morning and while still groggy took up the fishing rod and flung the hook with a flourish in the river. To his misfortune, the hook swung back swiftly and got stuck in a delicate part of his anatomy in the bottom. There he lay in agony, not able to extract it nor able to endure it. Such was, he said, the agony of the Kashmir question.

Resumption of Overflights

On returning to the Chancery, I fully shared with the Deputy High Commissioner, Parkash N. Kaul, what had passed during my meeting with the President. He agreed with me that the President was making sincere efforts to sell the Tashkent Declaration to the nation and was displaying self-confidence in the matter. He also agreed that the resumption of overflights was, indeed, a matter of urgency. Accordingly, I sent an immediate telegram to New Delhi urging immediate resumption of overflights.

On January 23, that is two days later I saw Ghulam Faruque, Minister of Commerce, with a view to know his assessment of the post-Tashkent developments in Pakistan. He was quite forthright and repeatedly stressed that the Declaration offered a unique opportunity for building up a new and friendly relationship between India and Pakistan and it would be a great tragedy if mistrust and suspicion were to cloud our judgement destroying the hopes of a bright future. While assuring him on the Indian Government's unreserved commitment to the Declaration, I asked for his views about the public agitation being whipped up against it in Pakistan. He admitted that, in spite of the strong and wide public support for the Declaration, there was considerable opposition on the surface led by ambitious politicians opposed to the regime. The President's efforts to convince the intelligentsia of the wisdom of basing future Indo-Pak relations on the Tashkent Declaration were having positive results. All rumours about the threat to President Ayub's authority were baseless. The President's position, according to him, was strong and his authority unquestioned.

I sounded him about the future of our trade and industrial relations as cooperation in these fields would mean people-to-people contacts on a large scale. He said he was in favour of them unless political obstacles came in his way. In the past, he said, his experience in negotiations with India had been unfortunate. In discussions some

fifteen years earlier about some sort of a Customs Union in jute, tea and textiles, he had found India taking an unfair and narrow view which was not in her enlightened self-interest. He said he was not saying this as a complaint but because of his desire to be quite frank with me.

The Ministry's reply to my telegram conveying President Ayub's urgent appeal for overflights, came as a shock. The argument advanced was that this question should be taken up along with other questions like general communications, confiscated cargos, trade exchanges and settlement of assets and properties expropriated during the conflict. The proper time for these discussions, they advised me, would be when the Ministerial delegations met to settle these problems in the near future for which, however, no date had yet been fixed.

As India's decision became known in the Pakistani official circles, their disappointment and resentment was obvious. Alvi, Director, Foreign Office, told me that whatever justification we had in not agreeing to overflights, it had not promoted mutual goodwill and confidence. Above all, he wanted me to appreciate that the request had been made to me personally by the President who was working for Indo-Pak friendship. Air Vice Marshal Asghar Khan, whom I had always found personally friendly and a believer in Indo-Pak amity, specially came to see me in Islamabad and expressed deep disappointment with our decision. Minister Faruque said that India's response caused great distress and bewilderment to those, including the President, who were striving against strong opposition to establish friendly relations with India.

I felt it necessary to send a strong telegram questioning the superior wisdom of the Ministry. "Did we want to use restoration of overflights as some kind of bargaining counter?" I asked. If so, I felt it might be some sort of shrewd business (which I failed to comprehend) but it was, as I viewed from Islamabad, shortsighted political policy in the present state of Indo-Pakistan relations and in the face of President Ayub's strenuous efforts with his own people to establish a new and friendly relationship with India. It was, I argued, in the context of the strong public agitation against the Tashkent Declaration that the President had attached great importance to this first spectacular act of normalization which would have carried weight with the Pakistani people. It was a great pity, I felt, that we had failed to oblige the President in a matter which, as he had told me, involved "no sacrifice" on our part.

Even as a bargain, the resumption of overflights was of equal importance to us, if not more, as we were taking longer and circuitous

routes to go to Afghanistan, Iran, Moscow and Western Europe. Could it be, I questioned, that there were some who wanted to derive malicious satisfaction by preventing regular communications between the two wings of Pakistan even at some sacrifice to India while we were at the same time professing earnest commitment to normalization and establishment of friendly relations? I was sure that the decisions, like this one, strengthened the position of Bhutto and other critics of Ayub who would point out how India would always try to twist Pakistan's arm.

My recommendation was that unless there were some strong overriding reasons of which I had not been made aware, we should inform President Ayub in a couple of days that Pakistan was welcome to resume overflights immediately if they so desired. I also expressed the hope that my views would be placed before the Prime Minister.

Four days later came a telegram informing me that the Prime Minister agreed with President Ayub that the overflights could be started without the least delay and that she was sending a letter for the President which I could personally deliver to him.

Visit to Islamabad: Meting with Senior Officials and Two Important Leaders

During the first week of February, I called on some Cabinet Ministers, among them Shoaib, Khawaja Shahabuddin, Altaf Hussain and the Speaker of the National Assembly in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. I found them fully supportive of the Tashkent Declaration without making any mention whatsoever of the Kashmir problem. Minister Shoaib, for example (to whom, incidentally, I had caused such serious embarrassment by my present of a saree at his son's wedding) started by expressing regrets at the High Commission's ill-treatment and difficulties during September and was effusive in welcoming me back. He was highly optimistic about our future relations. The Speaker, Abdul Jabbar, who received me when two other members of the National Assembly were also present, was quite informal and cordial, talked of the fraternal links between India and Pakistan and referred to the conflict during September as being a quarrel between brothers. He expressed the hope that as a result of the Tashkent Declaration we could, at last, hope for warm friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

In the Foreign Office, I had, as always, a very frank and friendly talk with Director Alvi. Like most officials he was enthusiastic about the happy prospect of relations with India, though not without some

restraint because of the anti-Tashkent attitude of his Foreign Secretary and the Foreign Minister. As already mentioned, he expressed serious disappointment with our rejection of the President's request for resumption of overflights, which he said cast serious doubt on our intentions. While praising Mrs. Gandhi for her resolve to implement the Tashkent Declaration, he raised the question of the inclusion of Shafi Qurreshi from Kashmir as Deputy Minister in the new Cabinet. He said that India, in the past, had taken various steps to integrate Jammu and Kashmir and she could logically do many things more. Wrong timing can, however, lead to avoidable resentment and bitterness. This decision of the new Prime Minister, immediately after the Tashkent Agreement, he said, had provoked a lot of criticism in the Cabinet and among other senior leaders. On my reply, he said he realized he had no business to refer to this matter but he was sharing a confidence. He always impressed me with his courtesy and sensitiveness.

The meeting with Foreign Secretary, Aziz Ahmad, turned out, as always, a highly distressing experience. After a brief reference to the new hopes raised by the Tashkent Declaration and India's sincere desire to work for understanding and friendship with Pakistan, I thought it fit to bring to his attention our horrible experiences of the indignities inflicted by the Pakistani police on the High Commissioner, his staff and their families after the outbreak of the hostilities in early September. While assuring him that I, on my part, would like to forget these sad episodes, I expressed my hope that he might like to look into those incidents when some senior police officials had flouted all diplomatic conventions and immunities and had humiliated and harassed my entire diplomatic staff.

He could have expressed some sort of regret over the alleged incidents, and could at least have promised vaguely to look into the matter. Instead, he retorted, even before I finished, that they had had enough of these baseless allegations and lies. There was no truth, whatsoever, in those allegations and there was nothing that needed investigation. I suggested that he might be misinformed as to the searches of the houses, the ransacking of the Chancery and the harassment and intimidation of the families that was carried out for hours on two different nights and the mob attacks on the Chancery on September 21, which were well-known facts. He stuck to his stand that there was no truth in these allegations which were fabricated by the Indian High Commission to malign Pakistan. Totally put out by his brazen attitude and offensive remarks, I stood up to go and said: "If that is your sense of truth, I do not think I have anything more to talk

about." Without saying good-bye, I walked out of the room. Reflecting on the incident later, I felt I had myself been, for once, guilty of losing my temper and flouting diplomatic correctness, which was quite inexcusable. With the passage of time, I had completely forgotten this incident but was reminded of it some fifteen years later by a senior Pakistani Ambassador. He asked me if I remembered that meeting at which he was present as a junior officer to take down notes. My abrupt departure, he said, was the subject of comment for a couple of weeks in the Foreign Office and other Ministries and with little sympathy for Aziz Ahmad's outburst when the facts about the ill-treatment of the Indian diplomats were well known in all the official circles.

During my stay in Rawalpindi, I learnt that Sir Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana was also there on a short visit, and I called on him, for old times sake. He received me in the country house of a friend outside Rawalpindi. He made inquiries about the political leaders he had known intimately and about personal friends in India of whom there were many. Once the decision for partition of India had been taken, he had completely renounced politics in Pakistan and had meticulously refrained from any contacts with the political leaders. Considering that he had, as a Unionist leader, taken a steadfast position against the Muslim League and partition of India, it was wise of him to efface himself from the new political scene and be forgotten, which he had done successfully.

He expressed profound sadness at the tensions and the conflicts which had bedevilled the relationship between the two brotherly nations. As the tragic memories of partition had been erased, the two Governments, he felt, should have built warm understanding and mutual cooperation which, unfortunately, had not happened. The September conflict, he said, was another deadly blow which had further embittered the two peoples.

I asked him what he thought of the Tashkent Declaration and the happy prospects it held out of a new and cooperative relationship. He said: "When I read about the signing of the Tashkent Declaration, on the morning of January 11, I could not believe this unexpectedly successful outcome. The news bulletins for the previous week had been reporting the completely irreconcilable positions of the two delegations and we were told that the negotiations had collapsed on the question of Kashmir. What struck me most was the courage displayed by Ayub in signing the agreement in the face of the stiff opposition in his own camp. To agree to set aside the Kashmir dispute and to commit to normalize and improve relations between the two countries and thus to fulfil the hopes of the two peoples, was an extraordinary

achievement for which Ayub displayed incredible courage and statesmanship which one had to admire. But to be quite frank with you, we who know Ayub well, have always found him sadly wanting in both these traits." He narrated an incident of World War II days when, as an army officer at a sensitive post Ayub had lost nerve and had been charged for serious dereliction of duty. It was he, Sir Khizar, who had to intercede with the army chiefs, especially with one General Messervy to protect Ayub's future.

Ayub, I said, was showing remarkable confidence and courage to honour the agreement, in spite of the stiff public opposition being aroused against it. His efforts to educate the public, I suggested, were certainly worthy of a strong leader. I asked for Sir Khizar's opinion if in the succeeding months the agreement would be successfully implemented. He expressed his doubts and said: "If the agitation increases and sharp personal attacks are levelled against him—which is a part of the political game—Ayub will easily lose courage and would yield to the influence of Mr. Bhutto and other hawks. With firmness and self-confidence, he can certainly weather the storm and make a historic contribution to peace and goodwill, but, as I said before, he is basically a timid man despite his impressive personality, and fights shy of facing tough challenges."

Since my arrival in Pakistan in August the previous year, I had been keen to meet the Amir of Kalabagh, Governor of West Pakistan, whom I had known during my college days as quite a popular young man, warmhearted, hospitable and with a blunt sense of humour. My requests to the Protocol Chief in Islamabad to arrange my call on the Governor had been of no avail. On my way back from Islamabad, I decided to get in touch with him directly and telephoned to his Secretary from the Faletti's Hotel in Lahore. The Secretary telephoned back to say that Nawab Sahib had often made inquiries about me and was looking forward to our meeting and suggested my coming over to the Government House the same evening for tea. On my arrival, an ADC greeted me and escorted me to the back of the mansion where a beautiful *shamiana* had been pitched in the well-maintained lawns surrounded by multicoloured flowers in full bloom. Nawab Sahib embraced me warmly and asked humorously why it had taken me so long to pay a visit to an old friend. I said something about the approach through the Protocol Department. In that case, he said, they would have seen to it that we never met. His hospitality, as true with Pakistani friends, was impressive with various snacks, sweets and fruits laid on three tables which could suffice for a dozen guests. Three smartly dressed attendants served us tea and snacks while we exchanged

pleasantries. Soon thereafter, as if on cue, they withdrew to a safe distance so that we could have a frank talk in confidence.

His views on the Tashkent Declaration and Indo-Pak relations were outspokenly supportive and he was highly critical of Bhutto's role during the September conflict, at the Tashkent meeting and now in the post-Tashkent period. Obviously, there was no love lost between the two. He blamed Bhutto squarely for planning the August infiltrations and the September conflict to which the President had meekly succumbed against his own better judgement. He said he had anticipated Bhutto's unrelenting opposition to any agreement with India and had frankly warned the President in Peshawar, where Nawab Sahib had gone to see him off before his departure to Tashkent on January 1, in the following words: "You must not return without a peaceful settlement with India as continuing conflicts will have grave consequences for the two countries and for Pakistan it will be disastrous. Do keep my advice in mind as our family in the frontier have faced invasions and know what war means. Beware of the exhortations of those who have never handled a gun."

"Will the President be able to control the popular agitation that is being whipped up against the Declaration?" I asked the Nawab Sahib. His reply was that from his talks with the President, he was sure of the President's sincerity in implementing it. The President, according to him, had also the administrative capacity and the support of the masses, who longed for peace, to suppress the agitation created by his political opponents and by the malevolent intrigues in his own camp. He, however, wondered if President Ayub could be relied upon to display continuous firmness and courage in the coming months. He could, according to Nawab Sahib, easily lose nerve and betray his own earnest conviction under the domineering influence of the foes of Indo-Pak friendship. He said he had a genuine fear of that although he himself, and some other friends had promised him full support.

He talked quite emotionally about free movement of peoples and greater contacts among the businessmen, the industrialists, the separated families and the elite. He said it was his ardent wish to invite from India all the former students of Aitchison College to meet their friends in Pakistan at a couple of days reunion. He was himself educated at the Aitchison College, the premier institution in the pre-independence days where the sons of Rajas, Maharajas and other feudal families were educated and recalled a large number of his personal friends in India.

Since he was at times critical of President Ayub, I ventured to ask him about his personal rapport with the President. He said: "You see

my car standing there in the back porch. I have only two suitcases, which are always packed. I am not attracted by the gubernatorial position and came here on Ayub's pressing request. The day we lose confidence in each other, I shall drive off at an hour's notice."

Visit to Larkana to Meet President Ayub Khan and Bhutto

In reply to my request to see the President with Mrs. Gandhi's letter about the overflights, I was told that as he was travelling in Sindh, he would be glad to receive me on the evening of February 7, at Foreign Minister Bhutto's residence in Larkana.

I motored down to Larkana via Hyderabad and the Sukker bridge and after some rest at the guest-house, proceeded to Bhutto's house. Bhutto was pacing up and down in the courtyard, a drink in hand, dressed in a khaki safari suit. He extended to me a friendly welcome and explained that they had just returned from a hunting party. The President, who was getting ready, would see me in half an hour. He asked the butler to bring me a drink, which I declined.

There was to be a dinner later in the evening where, Bhutto said, I would meet some members of the local gentry. Apologizing that he had to go and change, he took me to the reception room where Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, with her daughter and son, graciously came to keep me company. I was meeting her for the first time and was greatly struck by her personality. She was obviously a highly cultured and charming lady and during the conversation, impressed me with her knowledge of affairs, her dignified self-assurance and her innate gentleness and courtesy. I complimented her on their beautiful mansion with its elegant decor and the collection of exquisite *objects d'art*, some of them from China. She said she felt quite happy and peaceful whenever they visited Larkana, which was not often enough, and she spoke fondly about her children and their education.

Talking of Indo-Pakistan relations, she conveyed an impression of her genuine feeling for peace and goodwill between the two countries, referring to their common heritage. She suggested my taking some time out and visiting Mohenjo Daro, which was close by. She said here were reminders of a great civilization three thousand years old, which was the common heritage of our nations, and of which we all could be proud. While hoping for a better climate in our relations, I referred to the possibility of an early visit by Bhutto to India for Ministerial-level discussions. I wondered if she would accept my Prime Minister's invitation and accompany him to India. She said that although she would very much like to do that, it might not be possible for her to visit

India at that juncture. She, however, added that she would request me for a special favour while her husband was in New Delhi and that was, if his programme in India could be arranged in such a way that he could visit Poona at least for a few hours. His sister, of whom he had been very fond, had been after her death, buried in Poona and he ardently desired to visit Poona and pray at her grave. Since Bhutto would never make this suggestion personally, she thought it fit to mention it to me. I assured her that we would be very happy to arrange it. Little did I know that day, that the political events would take such an ill-fated turn in Pakistan and in its relations with India that Bhutto would not be destined to visit India and fulfil his wish to pray at his sister's grave.

During our conversation, the two children, bright and beautiful, sat silently with an occasional smile or a nod. By now the guests had started arriving in the courtyard which looked into the reception room. Mrs. Bhutto requested if I could draw the curtain as she was supposed to observe purdah from them. This, I thought, was a typical example of how in India and Pakistan we observed two different cultural customs—the urban and the rural. What is practised in the urban milieu had to give way to rural traditions on visits to hometowns and villages.

Bhutto came in, smartly attired as always, and took me to the President's suite. I gave the President the letter from Mrs. Gandhi and said that, as he would see, my Prime Minister had welcomed his suggestion for the resumption of overflights. Bhutto pointedly remarked that he had already got the news from All-India Radio and the Pakistani press. The President, after reading the letter, expressed his satisfaction at the Indian Prime Minister's decision which he said would be warmly welcomed in both countries. He said that while the formal reply communicating his warm appreciation for Mrs. Gandhi's letter would be sent through the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, he would like to share with me some of his thoughts in detail which I should convey to my Prime Minister.

He started by saying that he had greatly admired Mrs. Gandhi's speeches relating to the Tashkent Declaration and Indo-Pak relations immediately after her assumption of the office of the Prime Minister of India. In both countries, these speeches had strengthened the hopes of a bright future of friendship between our two peoples. He said: "Your Prime Minister has rightly pointed out the most serious problem facing our two nations, namely the problem of grinding poverty and the urgent need to ensure socio-economic well-being of the masses. It is, therefore, necessary for us to work earnestly to resolve our differences and reduce tension between the two countries. Only then will we be able to cooperate for the peace and prosperity of our region."

Referring to the Tashkent Declaration, he mentioned that he was faced with considerable opposition from those who accused him of having sold Kashmir down the drain. He himself was of the firm conviction that the Declaration was in the interest of both nations and would also help in resolving the Kashmir problem.

While assuring the President that my Prime Minister and her Cabinet colleagues were determined to work sincerely to build up goodwill and friendship with Pakistan, I drew his attention to the agenda proposed by the Pakistan Government for bilateral discussions which had caused some misgivings with its emphasis on discussion of the Kashmir question. Bhutto intervened to say that Kashmir was the basic issue and could not be side-tracked. Any worthwhile discussions between the two Ministerial delegations must, in his view, agree upon a procedure to settle the Kashmir issue. I pointed out that the two Heads of Government had had four days of long discussions in Tashkent on this question and had come to the conclusion that there was no meeting ground between their positions. They had, therefore, agreed to normalize relations between the two countries and to build up goodwill and cooperation between the two peoples which would also help, in due course, in appreciating each other's point of view on the Kashmir question in a more friendly atmosphere. Bhutto persisted with his argument to which I replied that it would be unfortunate to have in Ministerial talks a repetition of the stalemate that we had reached in Tashkent.

The President, no doubt influenced by the strong position taken by his Foreign Minister, said that he appreciated the difficulty anticipated by us but Kashmir was the real cause of the last conflict. It was, therefore, necessary to apply our mind to this basic problem. I again said that, accordingly as we solved some of the post-war problems and achieved active cooperation in economic, commercial and cultural fields, the Kashmir problem would assume its proper perspective and could be re-examined in the friendlier atmosphere. Bhutto said that, in that case, it would mean putting the Kashmir question in cold storage. I told him that insistence on long and acrimonious discussion on this subject would put us in the same situation as on January 7 after the Ministerial meeting in Tashkent. If the intention was to destroy the Tashkent spirit, the agenda suggested by the Pakistani side would certainly achieve that objective.

At this stage the President said that he agreed that we should avoid controversial debate on the Kashmir issue as that could vitiate the atmosphere. Perhaps, the two Ministers could discuss this subject separately or better the two Heads of Government could exchange

views through their High Commissioners. He agreed that mere reiteration of the present positions of the two Governments would do more harm than good. Bhutto again intervened to say that the procedure could certainly be worked out provided we were clear that the basic problem should have to be discussed.

Bhutto's somewhat persistent interventions did cause me some misgivings about the prospects of smooth and purposeful talks between the Ministerial delegations. The President, I felt, would have been much more helpful on the agenda question if Bhutto had not constantly interrupted. Even then the President did not lay undue stress on the Kashmir item, though he had naturally to support his Foreign Minister in the presence of a foreign envoy.

At the dinner table, I was immediately on the left of the President with the Iranian Foreign Minister Aram on his right. After talking to Aram for about ten minutes, the President turned to me and restarted the subject in Urdu. He wanted me to believe that nothing would have been easier for him than to say in Tashkent that no agreement was possible between the two Governments as Prime Minister Shastri was not prepared to discuss the Kashmir question. The Pakistani masses, fed on the animosity towards India and the belligerent opposition leaders would have acclaimed him as a great man. But what would have been the result? In spite of some stiff opposition in Tashkent, he came to the firm conclusion that the only way for the survival of India and Pakistan was to make a real effort towards reconciliation and friendship. I must, he said, be hearing every day the accusations against him that he had sold the blood of the Pakistani martyrs. It was with a clear conscience that he had agreed to the Tashkent Declaration with a view to stop the flow of blood between the two nations in the years to come. To reassure him, I again pointed out that the Indian nation, as a whole, had welcomed the Tashkent Declaration and was behind the Prime Minister.

To underline his sincerity, he especially wanted to convey to me his personal feelings about India. He said, of course, Pakistan was dearest to him but he wanted it to be believed that he was a friend of India and we must remember that the well-wishers of the India-Pakistan friendship were getting fewer and fewer every day and that this was our last chance. If we failed our peoples in their hopes this time, the coming generations would never forgive us.

India, he continued, was a big country with immense material, technical and intellectual resources. She could occupy a great place in the world for which Pakistan could never be a rival. But India could never achieve that place unless she befriended Pakistan with

understanding and goodwill. My comment was that both India and Pakistan had a great future with our economic and human resources and destiny beckoned us to realize that future by sincere cooperation instead of wasting our resources and energies in continuing and destructive confrontations.

To me, it appeared important to get his firm views on the agenda for the Ministerial meeting which must make vital decisions on the fist steps for normalization and cooperation between the two countries. Bhutto's repeated stress on the Kashmir question being basic to the agenda had been causing me serious anxiety. Taking the cue from his earlier remarks about the last chance to build up peace and friendship I suggested that we should fully utilize the opportunity of the forthcoming Ministerial meeting to lay a sound foundation for good-neighbourly relations and cultural, commercial and economic cooperation. Bhutto had harped on the importance of the Kashmir issue in the agenda which could destroy chances of more extensive and fruitful discussions on restoring cooperative relationship. Our people had suffered grievously for many years for the hatred and bitterness created in the name of Kashmir. We should, I urged, give them some respite from this hostile propaganda and concentrate on constructive and cooperative efforts. The President said that he would certainly bear this in mind.

After dinner, there began what recalled to one's mind the nightly relaxations of the Nawabs of Lucknow. Three pretty singing girls brought from Karachi entertained the gathering with their beautiful voices, amorous gestures and tantalizing dances while those in the audience, now and then moved by a particular verse or stricken by a shaft of a glance would shower currency notes on them. President Ayub handed a few notes only once and retired soon thereafter while the merry party continued. Bhutto apparently liked entertaining his friends in the countryside in this manner and seemed to be enjoying himself. As the girls sang Faiz's gazal,

> The roses will suddenly burst into bloom
> and the spring breeze will start blowing
> Please do come along
> so that the garden wakes up to life again,

Bhutto danced a few steps with the lovely singer. It was a world far apart from the political disciplines across the frontier and Gandhi caps, prohibition and strict social behaviour.

Driving back the next morning to Karachi, the question constantly haunted me as to the future of the negotiations for normalization of our relations. Bhutto, who opposed the Declaration in Tashkent and had been sulking since then, was now, as I could see, firmly asserting himself to subvert the negotiations. Ayub, on the other hand, had said many positive things to impress me with his strong commitment to a new era of Indo-Pak friendship and to strive resolutely for this objective in the face of all opposition. Even if he was sincere in his resolve, would he be able to pursue this policy with Bhutto's adamant opposition? As was generally believed, he had to come to Bhutto's home not for a hunting party but to win him over to his side. Bhutto had a popular appeal with the intelligentsia, the middle classes, the students and the workers. Besides, he was a much shrewder political manipulator than Ayub could ever be. Between the two, Bhutto was likely to show much greater courage, determination and assertiveness to propagate his policy of confrontation while not hesitating to exploit the public to erode the President's resolve. The next two or three weeks, I thought were going to be decisive.

Repudiation of the Tashkent Agreement

To my great relief, the Pakistan Government at last agreed to the meeting of the Ministerial Delegations in Rawalpindi on March 2. This raised hopes that some major steps would be agreed upon to restore normal relations between the two countries. By February 25, the armed forces of the two sides would be withdrawn to the pre-August 5 positions and the territories captured by each side during the conflict would have been vacated. The next logical step had to be normal contacts and communications between the two peoples, release of confiscated properties and some measure of cultural and commercial exchanges even if by slow degrees.

The Indian delegation was unusually high-powered. Apart from the Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, there were two other Cabinet Ministers, Sanjeeva Reddy, Minister for Shipping and Civil Aviation and Manubhai Shah, Minister for Commerce. C.S. Jha, the Foreign Secretary, was accompanied by some dozen senior advisers from the other Ministries to deal with all the post-war problems. The natural expectation was that all the provisions of the Tashkent Declaration relating to the normalization of relations and promotion of cooperation would be discussed in detail to arrive at some specific decisions which could be quickly implemented by a Joint Commission and Sub-Commissions set up for the purpose.

The attitude of the Pakistani side, first during the official-level discussions and later at the formal meeting of the Ministers, came as a bolt out of the blue. The Foreign Secretary, Aziz Ahmad, when discussing the agenda, made it clear that the question of Kashmir had to be discussed first. Unless there was an agreement on reopening the question and a self-executing machinery decided upon relating to the future of the Kashmir state, he said, the various provisions of the Tashkent Declaration could not be discussed. Jha pointed out that the objective of this meeting was to discuss and implement the Tashkent Declaration, which was meant to achieve peaceful, good-neighbourly and cooperative relations between the two countries, and not to rake up an extraneous issue, on which no agreement could be arrived at even between the two Heads of Government in Tashkent. It was futile to argue as Aziz Ahmad's attitude was either to reopen the Kashmir issue or to slam the door.

Whatever hope was left over was destroyed within half an hour the next morning by Bhutto's opening speech at the Ministerial meeting. He dwelt at length upon the history of the Kashmir dispute harking back to the events of 1949-50 and the UN resolutions, harshly criticizing the Indian actions at every stage. After about forty minutes of this, Swaran Singh, who had shown exemplary patience and calmness, intervened to draw Bhutto's attention to the fact that both sides had discussed this question *ad infinitum* in the United Nations meetings for many years. He hoped it was not the Pakistan Foreign Minister's intention to repeat those debates. Since the Indian delegation had come to Islamabad on the invitation of the Pakistan Government to discuss the implementation of the Tashkent Declaration, it was appropriate that the two delegations should apply their minds to its provisions and take decisions to implement them. They could spend hours, he said, in reiterating their well-known positions on Kashmir but the subject was not relevant at this stage, as the two Heads of Government had only a few weeks earlier spent hours in discussing it in Tashkent and had agreed to set it aside. Bhutto's reply was that Kashmir was the "basic problem" and unless this was resolved, there could be no further discussions on the normalization of relations.

In all, the meeting lasted about three hours in which the Pakistan Foreign Minister was the main speaker and Kashmir his only subject. The other Pakistani Ministers did not utter a single word. All suggestions to discuss measures with a view to settle urgent issues relating to communications, restoration of properties and ships captured during the war and movement of people and goods between the two countries were rejected. It was clear that, having failed to abort the

meeting in Tashkent, Bhutto was determined to destroy the Declaration in Islamabad.

In this impasse, Swaran Singh asked for a call on the President, who received the Indian delegation along with the Pakistani Ministers. The Indian Foreign Minister briefly described how the issue of Kashmir had been put forward as a roadblock to any other discussions.

The President, it appared, had now completely gone back on his own position and timorously succumbed to his Foreign Minister's influence. He ramblingly referred to the need to settle the Kashmir dispute which, he said, could help in improving the atmosphere for further discussions. Without Bhutto's vehemence or conviction he went on speaking discursively for about twenty-five minutes, avoiding any reference to the Tashkent Declaration. He repeated the gross story he had told me earlier of the fisherman in agony with the fish hook in a delicate part of his anatomy to illustrate the inextricable problem of Kashmir.

After this meeting with the President, the Indian delegation decided to leave immediately for New Delhi, intensely disappointed with the totally negative attitude of the Pakistani leaders. Why did they invite the Indian delegation, if they did not have the good faith to take some positive steps? President Ayub's volte-face struck me as highly unbecoming of his high office when on February 7 he had assured me in Larkana that the Kashmir question need not figure in the agenda. Instead, he had said, "the two Ministers could discuss the subject separately or better the two Heads of Government could exchange views through their High Commissioners." Somewhere along the way, he had lost nerve.

To add to my dejection as I saw off the Indian delegation, a senior official let loose a barb: "This is the result of your ill-conceived insistence on the resumption of overflights. Pakistan is no longer interested in any dialogue." My hurt reply was that, in similar circumstances, I would again make a strong recommendation to the same effect. We should have the satisfaction that we remained true to the Tashkent spirit and could not be accused of stooping to use coercion or blackmail against Pakistan.

My Visit to the Village of My Birth

President Ayub Khan had readily agreed to my request to visit the town of Jaranwala and a couple of neighbouring villages where my family had lived for generations before migrating in 1947. With an escort provided by the Pakistani authorities, I started from Lahore stopping on

the way at Nankana Sahib, a small town of great sanctity to the Sikhs, being the birthplace of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of the Sikh faith. Before partition it used to attract Sikh pilgrims from all over India, specially on the birth anniversary of the saint. Thrice, as a student, I had visited this place on the occasion of the festival, when this small town would suddenly be transformed into a city with shops, decorations, illuminations and restaurants extending for miles outside its limits. The main shrine would be packed with tens of thousands of pilgrims and there was continuous chanting of hymns at several places all day and night. Other smaller shrines in the town would also be full of devotional activity with festive decorations. In later years, when I visited Fatima, Portugal, on two occasions, I was very much reminded of this. Fatima, on the occasion of the annual festival used to be crowded with hundreds of thousands of pilgrims and at night this small village and all the neighbouring hills used to be crowded with multitudes holding lighted candles while their chanting of "Ave Maria" resounded in the skies.

Nankana Sahib had now changed unbelievably. It was a sleepy little village with hardly any shops and little activity in the streets. The Hindus and the Sikhs who constituted the majority of its population having migrated to India, inevitably the town had fallen on lean days. Two policemen were lying on *charpoys* at the entrance of the shrine, obviously to guard it against any sacrilegious intruders. The shrine was a vast deserted space with the sacred pool dry. I wandered about for a long time, reminiscing past scenes of teeming devotees, flowers in hands, the longing for the Divine in their eyes and prayers on their lips, moving all over and kneeling and kissing the ground at a dozen places of worship. The hymns, the chanting of which rose high up from this shrine embodied the essence of Vedanta and Islamic Sufism with their message of devotion to the Divine, human brotherhood and selfless service. But all that piety and ecstasy belonged to an era that would return no more, regretted in vain.

Jaranwala was a fair sized town with administrative headquarters, a high school, and with hospitals and busy marketing and shopping centres. It was the town of my childhood and it was here that I had spent two years doing my high school studies. Driving through the town after twenty-five years brought back swarms of memories, more so when walking through the school rooms, the library, the hostel and the playing fields. A teacher, whom I met while walking around, was good enough to accompany me and particularly showed me the hall where on a board were inscribed the names of the students who had distinguished themselves in a particular year. My name was still there

for the year 1930, thirty-five years after my school days, which astonished me. With the anguished memories of the horrors of partition and the tragic confrontations and conflicts since then, one would have readily concluded that all Indian names and associations with institutions and buildings would have been boorishly effaced long ago. The Pakistanis, I often found, did not display such petty-mindedness as illustrated even more strikingly by an example in Rawalpindi. The late Sardar Bahadur Mohan Singh, who was during the 1930s adviser to the Secretary of State in London, owned a palatial building in Rawalpindi, which he had named after his son and was called "Bachan Niwas"—the house of Bachan.[4] The Pakistan Government had used this building as official residence for high dignitaries and at present it served as a guest house for the VIPs. During my visits, I saw that the name "Bachan Niwas" was still prominently there without the Pakistani officials yielding to the understandable impulse of putting a persianized name on this important official building.

Before I left the school, the teacher offered me tea. He reminisced about the pre-partition days and the family friends that he had in India. He was full of happy memories of the past years and regret at the lack of contacts and communication between the friends and the families so close to each other in the two countries. Like most average Pakistanis, excluding the politically hostile and fanatically disposed minority, he hardly referred to the September conflict with any rancour and was critical of the Kashmir issue being always dragged in to create hatred and tension between the two peoples who would like to live in peace and friendship.

My home village was Shanker, 54 G.B. (The numbers were given according to the location of the village on the irrigation canal—in this case Gogira Branch). Fond memories of the roads, the houses and the shops still lingered. I avoided visiting our houses, which were now occupied by Muslim refugee families from India, in order not to give any impression of unpleasant intrusion. But I longed to see the thirty or so Muslim families who had watched tearfully when the Hindu and Sikh families were leaving the village in fright with minimum baggage when the whole of the Punjab was rocked with communal violence in August 1947. It was a magic moment when I

[4] "Bachan" was the pet name of Gurbachan Singh who after his graduation from the Balliol College, Oxford, joined the Indian diplomatic service and was one of its highly esteemed members. Among his diplomatic assignments, he was High Commissioner to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Ambassador to Switzerland.

arrived there and accosted a couple of old friends. In a trice, the whole locality was agog, some fifty men, women and children surrounding me, excited, amazed and happy at the sudden reappearance of someone they had known so well and had yet nearly forgotten. Soon tables were laid, every family bringing fruit, sweets, soft drinks or tea. It was the kind of genuine love that had nourished my childhood years, and to see it demonstrated again, unchanged, after this long while brought tears to my eyes. Obviously, the village economy had changed a great deal, for in the old days one could hardly get fresh fruit or soft drinks there. I spent a blissful hour with them, reminiscing over so many fond memories and hilarious stories of the days gone by. They still longed to see again the families who had left. For a few years after partition, they said, they used to go to Nankana Sahib on the occasion of the annual festival. The Pakistan Government allowed pilgrims from India to visit the shrine on this occasion, and they hoped that some of "our people" would turn up. But they were always sadly disappointed. Could I, they said, request as many of them as possible to visit Nankana Sahib at the next festival so that they could meet them and renew old friendships?

From the village, I drove to Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) to visit the district headquarters and returned to Lahore the same evening.

Further Unsuccessful Attempts Towards Normalization of Relations

By the middle of March, Pakistan's attitude became increasingly non-cooperative and rigid. I was particularly dismayed by the official attitude to the participation of the Pakistani poets in the Indo-Pakistan poetical symposium (Mushaira) which was an annual event. Our invitations, sent to the Pakistan Foreign Office for communication to the poets concerned, were never sent to them. The great poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, whom I met, said he had received no invitation through the Pakistan Government. Having received a direct telegram from the organizers in New Delhi, he had been vainly trying to get the official permission. We got similar replies from the other poets who were equally keen to go.

About a week later, when I was in Islamabad, I met Director Alvi of the Foreign Office and asked him why he, with all his love for Urdu literature, was so determined to prevent even these limited contacts between the poets of the two countries. He agreed that it was a grave matter but they had to take this unhappy decision after having reliably learnt that the lives of these poets would not be safe if they visited India. I protested that this was the most absurd accusation. We would

have assured their safety and, as always, they would have received in New Delhi enthusiastic reception and warm hospitality. With a wry smile, he said, "Who is talking of their lives being in danger in India! It is on their return to Pakistan that they would have faced some fanatical assassins."

About the same time, a number of friends of India in Karachi decided to form a Pakistan-India Friendship Society. They approached me and I warmly welcomed the idea. I recalled how many leading persons including Jayaparkash Narayan, General Cariappa, J.J. Singh and Dawar were keenly working for Indo-Pak friendship. Later on, I was invited to attend the inaugural function at the Beach Luxury Hotel on April 2. About a week before the function, I was informed by the organizers that they had to cancel the programme as the Foreign Office had advised them against it.

With the humiliating consequences of the aggressive venture of last September and having signed with full knowledge the agreement for peace, friendship and cooperation with India at Tashkent, the Pakistani leadership was now a hostage to its own policies and pronouncements. The brave promise to fulfil Pakistan's destiny by liberating Kashmir had boomeranged and the oft-repeated commitment to honour the Tashkent Declaration had been given up by President Ayub. To save face, the leaders and the press had started indulging in the language of hatred and confrontation against India.

A large number of leaders I met, including the Amir of Kalabagh, Finance Minister Shoaib, Commerce Minister Faruque, Information Minister Khawaja Shahabud Din and Air Marshal Asghar Khan as well as several senior Secretaries of the Government of Pakistan and many among the general public expressed their earnest desire to have friendly relations with India. They felt that it was no longer the problem of controlling any anti-Declaration opposition, which was quite manageable. Some of them deplored, in confidence, what they considered as determined efforts by Bhutto and his friends to build up tension between the two countries for their own political ambitions.

By the beginning of March, Ayub Khan appeared to me to be a completely changed man. Addressing the National Assembly in Dacca on March 8, he said that "Pakistan's basic stand was that an honourable settlement of the Kashmir dispute is a sine qua non for a stable peace between Pakistan and India." From then onwards, Ayub himself joined in tirades against India and started propagating Bhutto's thesis that solution of the Kashmir problem was a condition precedent to normalization of relations with India.

About the middle of March, a friend in Washington informed me, as a result of his talk with a high American dignitary, that Bhutto was in trouble and might be fired by President Ayub. This assessment may have been valid till the third week of February, but I could see that, since March 1, Bhutto's position was much stronger. Ayub had made his peace with him when the President went to Larkana on February 7 to bring Bhutto back to Islamabad. Every day, since then, Bhutto had been exercising dominant influence over Ayub. He could have got into some trouble only if the Nawab of Kalabagh and other senior leaders had shown the courage to make known their views to Ayub. Unfortunately, in the prevailing atmosphere at the top leadership, the Ministers and the Governors found it safer to keep their counsel to themselves. Thus, the more reasonable leaders like Faruque, Shoaib, Shahabud Din and Kalabagh displayed helplessness in the face of anti-Indian and pro-Peking pressures being built up under Bhutto's advice and were sadly watching the reversal of the hopes generated by the Tashkent Agreement.

Bhutto's speeches in March, April and May were highly distressing. My first experience was at the session of the National Assembly at Dacca in March 1966 which I attended to sense the atmosphere in East Pakistan and the attitude of the leaders there. There was a good deal of criticism of the Pakistan Government jeopardizing the peace and welfare of the 50 million people of East Pakistan when launching the conflict in Kashmir. Bhutto warned them that if they thought Kashmir was far away they could be "whetting the appetite of a predatory aggressor." Pakistan's own destiny, he said, "will remain unfulfilled till Kashmir is decolonized and liberated." India, he continued, could not tolerate the existence of Pakistan. When a member asked why the security of East Pakistan had been jeopardized during the conflict, Bhutto termed this as "a bankrupt and immoral argument" which was the product of a "decadent mind of a decadent leadership." Elaborating, he wanted the East Pakistanis to believe that during the conflict, the Chinese Ambassador at Warsaw had conveyed, through the American Ambassador, a warning to India to keep off East Pakistan. The American State Department, however, never made any such *demarche* nor was it conceivable in the existing state of relations between USA, China and India. Most of the audience considered it as a fabrication. As a Bengali official put it to me: "How far had the Chinese come to the rescue of Mr. Bhutto in West Pakistan beyond making a few empty noises?"

In the Assembly debate, he said: "Pakistan has a right to liberate her people of Jammu and Kashmir. . . and will always go to their

defence." When some members charged that the Government was responsible for starting the September conflict, Bhutto lost his temper and shouted that it was India which had carried out a "preplanned aggression to destroy Pakistan under the pretext of the Kashmir dispute." Retorting to the critics, he said it was a shameful slander and he was shocked that "there were some so brainwashed as to say that Pakistan started the war." Since there was strict censorship of the press, and the leadership and the intelligentsia were silenced by Ayub's dictatorship and his intelligence service, there was little difficulty in propagating falsehoods, even though the reports of the UN observers, the admissions by the captured infiltrators and the reporting by the world press placed the blame for aggression squarely on Pakistan.

The reactions of the East Pakistanis to the Tashkent Declaration were, naturally, of special interest to me as they constituted the majority of the Pakistani population though, admittedly, they had little real say in the governance of the country. The messages from our Mission in Dacca conveyed a sense of discontent and disillusionment among the officials and the general public. The President was being accused of having waged a fruitless war with serious economic consequences especially for East Pakistan. Since they were completely cut off from West Pakistan for several weeks, they accused West Pakistani leaders of callousness towards East Pakistan's security.

Sheikh Mujib Rahman Announces his Six-Point Autonomy Demands

As I returned from Larkana, I read the proceeding of the meeting of the opposition parties which met at Lahore on February 5 and 6. More than 700 delegates had gathered including 21 from East Pakistan. As was to be expected, the Tashkent Declaration was condemned as a betrayal of Pakistan and strong speeches were made inciting people to violence and revolt against the Ayub regime. Sensing the danger, the Government reacted promptly by arresting the top leaders of these parties. From East Pakistan Mujibur Rahman, the Awami League leader, struck quite a different note to the dismay of the West Pakistani leaders. He said that while they were opposed to the Ayub Government on many issues, especially in regard to their demand for restoration of democracy, East Pakistan was solidly behind the Tashkent Declaration. He and his party in East Pakistan were opposed to building up tension and enmity against India which could lead to another war. East Pakistan, he said, was very vulnerable and his people were definitely of the view that they must live in peace and friendship with India, which the Tashkent

Declaration promised. This attitude of Sheikh Mujib and his delegates from East Pakistan sharply divided the leaders of the two wings and the conference which started with much fanfare ended on a feeble note.

It was at this conference that Sheikh Mujib announced his six-point programme of autonomy for East Pakistan which was, quite understandably, opposed by the West Pakistan opposition parties. The autonomy formula as announced by Sheikh Mujib demanded a far-reaching devolution of the central authority on the grounds that the East Pakistanis had been victims of economic injustice and were denied a share in political power and administrative authority. He demanded, on behalf of the Awami League, that Pakistan should have federal constitution with a democratically elected parliamentary form of Government. The Federal Government would deal only with Defence and Foreign Affairs while the remaining subjects would be the responsibility of the Federating States. It was even suggested that East and West Pakistan should preferably have separate currencies to stop exploitation of East Pakistan's economic earnings by West Pakistan. He also recommended that East Pakistan should be able to set up its trade missions in foreign countries and sign trade agreements. Finally, according to the autonomy proposals, East Pakistan would have its own military or para-military forces.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's demand for such vast constitutional powers for East Pakistan, coupled with his statement that East Pakistan supported the Tashkent Declaration and wanted to live in peace and friendship with India, could not but arouse the worst fears of President Ayub, Bhutto and other West Pakistani leaders. Free movement of people and information between India and Pakistan and the restoration of cultural, commerical and economic relations, always considered as risky for the authoritarian regime, now raised the spectre of East Pakistan establishing close links with India in these fields, and thereby distancing itself from West Pakistan.

Thus, the sudden announcement of the East Pakistani autonomy demand in the wake of the Tashkent Declaration, strengthened the position of those opposed to the normalization of relations with India. A confrontationist posture towards India, they felt, would be a warning to those East Pakistani leaders who might be thinking of good relations with India as provided in the Declaration.

I had little doubt that a major factor in President Ayub's going back on his solemn commitments in Tashkent was the challenge posed by the East Pakistani demand for autonomy. This happened in the middle of February, precisely at the time when Ayub had started going back on

all his previous exhortations to the public in favour of the Declaration and his assurances to me.

In East Pakistan the six-point autonomy demand had caught the imagination of the people and was gathering momentum much to the embarrassment and annoyance of the Pakistani Government. Notwithstanding Ayub's threats of the "language of weapon" and "civil war" to crush the movement, I got reports from Dacca of the increasing support of the people to this programme.

Intensification of Anti-Indian Speeches and Propaganda

During April and May, there was increasing anti-Indian propaganda in the press and frequent bellicose speeches by Bhutto and one or two other Ministers. For example, on May 4 he made his well-known confrontation speech at the Sindh University convocation. He justified the policy of "confrontation" in the present state of international affairs and reiterated this on May 18 at the Political Science Conference at the same university. In an interview published in the May issue of the *Urdu Digest* he delivered a vitriolic attack on Hinduism which he said tried to destroy every other religion and culture. In answer to India's desire for compliance with the Tashkent Agreement, Bhutto accusing India of "treachery," forecast that there would be a further struggle with India to settle the differences. After aborting the meeting of the Ministers in Rawalpindi, the speeches of President Ayub in Dacca and the Foreign Minister's scathing attacks in the National Assembly and later in Karachi, were further clear warnings to India.

The events of March 1966 had sealed the fate of the Tashkent Declaration and the month ended on a clear threat of confrontation by the Pakistani leaders rejecting any possibility of contacts and cooperation with India. Yet who were these leaders? Bhutto was in the forefront with an occasional speech by one or two other Ministers to keep him company. President Ayub, off and on, used strong language against India but these were the pronouncements of a befuddled person. There was hardly any other leader of stature who had made anti-Indian speeches or spoke against mutual cooperation. In East Pakistan nobody seemed to share Bhutto's hatred of India. Now that it was comparatively easy to move about and meet a large number of public men, intellectuals and common citizens, I was struck by the fervent desire they expressed for friendly relations with India and their disgust for some politicians' nefarious designs to create hatred and build up barriers. How it was helping Pakistan or hurting India, no intelligent Pakistani could understand.

To Bhutto, for some reason, even the mention of cooperation with India was anathema. In the first week of May, when some press reports appeared to the effect that the Indian Minister Asoke Mehta had, during his visit to Washington, discussed the possibility of Indo-Pakistan economic cooperation in some areas, the Government of Pakistan started warning people against this "new Indian trap" "to side-track" the main dispute between the two countries, i.e., Kashmir. Bhutto personally made it clear that "cooperation could not be possible with an aggressive country which denies the birthright of a people struggling to shake off the shackles of slavery." Addressing the Hyderabad University convocation on May 4 he said: "those who desire status quo talk of cooperation. . . So long as aggression continues and injustice is rampant talk of cooperation is meaningless." Most of the public men and intelligentsia were unhappy at the antics.

A few weeks later, Finance Minister Mohammed Shoaib was assuring the East Pakistanis that the Government was seriously concerned about the effects of the Farraka barrage and they were anxious to find a solution in consultation with India. He realised that the problems of irrigation, navigation and flood control in East Pakistan could only be solved with India's cooperation. Yet, knowing Bhutto's opposition to the word "cooperation" Shoaib added that "there could be no question of any joint venture with India." Anxious to utilize any opportunity for some contacts and dialogue between the two Governments, I met Shoaib the same afternoon in the Assembly Chamber with a view to understand what sort of consultations and cooperation he had in mind so that I could communicate them to my Government. I assured him that the Government of India would be most willing to discuss proposals which could alleviate human suffering and promote economic progress. Shoaib was rather evasive as he understood that his rational approach would be condemned and overruled by the only Minister who, according to what the Nawab of Kalabagh had mentioned to me, dominated the Cabinet decisions with the President compliantly nodding. Shoaib's rather helpless reply to me was: "I am not a politician and put forward proposals as an administrator which I consider to be in the best interest of our people." What kind of dialogue or cooperation should take place with India would be a political decision which he could not anticipate. He also referred to his recent talks with George Woods, president of the World Bank, on the same subject and the latter had been assured of India's willingness to cooperate by Minister Asoke Mehta. In reply to my specific question as to how to start a dialogue, he advised me to approach the Foreign Office.

Bhutto Quits Pakistan Government

Bhutto's sudden resignation as Foreign Minister came as a surprise even though vague rumours about his departure had been floating for some months both in Pakistan and abroad. Considering his strong position in the national politics of Pakistan and the impact his personality had in the country's foreign relations, his departure was a major political event.

There was a widely shared opinion that Bhutto played a dominant role in the Cabinet and that President Ayub was guided a great deal by his advice and predilections even against his own better judgement. Besides, Bhutto was the only Cabinet Minister who shared national status with Ayub and was even more popular with the intelligentsia, the students and the middle classes. For all these reasons, to Ayub his support seemed indispensable in spite of some gossip that Bhutto with his popularity and being an ambitious and a much shrewder politician, could be a threat to the President's own position. The latter possibility seemed remote at this stage as President Ayub had avoided confrontation and had won him over by completely surrendering his own position on the Tashkent Declaration. Above all, in the Pakistani system what counted most was the loyalty of the military and bureaucratic setup and the support of the feudal landlords and big business. Ayub could be sure of the allegiance of these elements, which had serious reservations about the mercurial Bhutto with his socialistic proclivities.

As a further attempt for a dialogue for normalization of relations between the two countries, the Government of India agreed in the beginning of June to my formally approaching the Pakistan Government again. Our suggestion was to hold the talks at the official level without any preconditions. Although I made the proposal after Bhutto's relinquishment of his office and the replacement of Aziz Ahmad, Foreign Secretary, by S.M. Yousuf, I was doubtful of change in the Pakistani attitude. No longer was this a question of personalities. Over the past months, President Ayub had adopted an anti-Tashkent attitude and had repeatedly stated that the solution of the Kashmir question was a sine qua non to any discussions on good relations with India. Bhutto's departure could not, therefore, make any difference. Unofficially, I was advised by a Minister that any change at this stage would lead to strong agitation by the opposition leaders which Bhutto would exploit through his own supporters.

As expected, the Pakistani reply insisted upon meaningful discussions, on Kashmir as a condition precedent to any normalization of relations.

Bhutto had a long tenure of eight years as Cabinet Minister of which the last three years had been as Foreign Minister when he took some bold initiatives to diversify and strengthen Pakistan's international relations and exercised a decisive influence in implementing Pakistan's foreign policy. In Pakistan's short history, he had been its most outstanding Foreign Minister. His signal achievement was the development of close ties with China which certainly enhanced Pakistan's international status and gave her greater manoeuvrability and independence of action in foreign relations. Considering the background of the fractious relations between the two countries because of Pakistan's military alliance with the U.S. and China's implacable hostility towards the latter, Bhutto's accomplishment was a remarkable feat of diplomacy, even while bearing in mind that the trend to befriend China had started before he became Foreign Minister. Equally noteworthy were his fervent efforts to promote political understanding and cooperation with the Islamic countries, especially Indonesia, Iran and Turkey. With the Soviet Union also he had started a dialogue of friendship and cooperation.

Apparently, there were both internal and external factors that led to Bhutto's exit. In foreign relations, Bhutto had antagonized the United States and was by no means popular in the United Kingdom. The American disapproval and dislike of him aggravated accordingly as Pakistan grew closer to China. Some press comments and private conversations with some East European diplomats attributed his resignation to strong American pressure. During Bhutto's tenure, Pak-U.S. relations had sunk to the lowest level and it was freely talked about that the Americans had plainly conveyed to President Ayub that there could be no resumption of American aid so long as Bhutto was at the helm of Pakistan's foreign relations. To Pakistan, stoppage of American economic and military aid had created a critical situation despite Chinese assistance and some expectations from the Soviet Government. All the evidence confirmed that the American pressure supported by the British diplomats brought about his dismissal. The resumption of American aid was announced almost immediately after Bhutto's resignation.

On the other hand, the President's friends in their talks laid equal emphasis on the contributory domestic factor. It was, according to them, Bhutto's growing popularity in West Pakistan and his assertive attitude in the Cabinet which had started causing concern to President

Ayub Khan. There were also suggestions that Bhutto's popularity with the younger elements was by now spreading to the younger officers in the army which further alarmed the President. In this situation, the Nawab of Kalbagh, the Governor of West Pakistan, who always thoroughly disapproved of Bhutto's policies and his confrontationist language, again mounted pressure on the President to get rid of him. Otherwise, the Governor threatened to resign himself. All these domestic factors must have further strengthened President Ayub's resolve to part company with his Foreign Minister.

The massive demonstrations Bhutto received after quitting his office and on arrival at Lahore, Hyderabad, and Karachi quite apart from his own home town Larkana, were indicators of his popularity. At Lahore and Karachi there was complete dislocation of traffic for several hours and the motorcade was halted with slogans like "Bhutto come back," "Down with U.S. aid" and even "Ayub Murdabad" (death to Ayub).

It was interesting that with a view to reassure Peking and to allay the anxiety of the China lobby in Pakistan, the official reports at the time of Bhutto's exit insisted that there would be no change in official policy, particularly towards China. Soon thereafter, we had the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En-lai, though the reception for him was not on the grand scale that previous Chinese dignitaries were given. Another indication of the continuity of Bhutto's foreign policy was the visit of a Pakistani military delegation, the first of its kind, to the Soviet Union.

Further Talks with the Pakistani Officials

In the third week of June, Home Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda was on a visit to Srinagar. In reply to a question by reporters, he stated that the state of Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India and no power could question that status. There was some sharp reaction among a few Muslim League leaders and, as expected, a statement by the President of the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Abdul Hamid Khan. There was no statement by the new Foreign Minister nor was there any other official reaction. Apparently, as an afterthought, and anticipating criticism of the Government for its silence, Ali Akbar Khan, Minister for Kashmir Affairs, condemned Nanda's statement and reiterated the Pakistani pledge to fight for the right of self-determination by the people of Kashmir. A day later, on a request by the Foreign Secretary Mohd. Yousuf, I went to see him accompanied by the Deputy High Commissioner, Uma Shanker Bajpai. I found Mohd. Yousuf, who even in trying situations would come out with a radiant smile and a

friendly greeting, looking rather grim and stern. He had his Joint Secretary, Iqbal Akhund, with him. He stated in a solemn tone that the Pakistan Government was appalled at Nanda's statement in Srinagar two days earlier and wanted to lodge a strong protest against it. Such a statement, he added, could not but destroy the Tashkent spirit. He had been asked by his Government to hand over a protest note to me which should be communicated to the Government of India.

In reply, I said that my Government's position regarding the state of Jammu and Kashmir being an integral part of India had always been unequivocally maintained by us and, even at Tashkent, the late Prime Minister Shastri had left no doubt on that subject. I, therefore, failed to comprehend the reason for this protest. I had no intention of refusing to accept the protest note, although my reply was already there for his record. In any case, I promised to send a formal reply after consulting my Government. In regard to his reference to the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration, I said that I was pleasantly surprised to be reminded that the Declaration was still alive. My impression was that with the Pakistani side having broken off discussions at the Ministerial meeting in the first week of March and with the constant hate-India campaign of his Foreign Minister and other leaders, the Tashkent Declaration had already been given a deadly blow. There was nothing in Pakistan to encourage me, but I did hope one day we would restart discussions for normalization of our relations.

After a few minutes more of similar exchanges, Uma Bajpai, Akhund and I got up and walked out with Mohd. Yousuf bidding us a long-faced good-bye at the door. Suddenly, and apparently not without a forethought he asked, in the same serious tone, if I could kindly stay for a few moments more. As I resumed my seat, his demeanour changed like quicksilver. Bursting into laughter he said: "Now that the formality is over, don't let it cast a shadow on our mutual regard and goodwill. The formal protest had to be lodged but tell me: Why did your Nanda Sahib have to rake up this question in Srinagar to provoke further verbal feuds and retaliatory ripostes from Pakistan as if you and I are not having enough headaches otherwise?" In an equally light vein I said that if a Home Minister of India on a visit to Srinagar, with all the fulminations of the Pakistan Foreign Minister, had failed to clearly reaffirm the Government of India's position regarding Kashmir, he would have had to face hell in Parliament on return to New Delhi.

He chuckled and said, "You have no doubt seen the brilliant performance of our champion in this morning's papers." He was referring to Minister Chaudhary Ali Akbar Khan's strong attacks on India the previous evening in reply to Nanda's statement. This was

another instance of how, even in the worst days of tension and press attacks, decency and human courtesy did not forsake scores of Pakistani officials and public men who maintained their goodwill and sense of humour even when critical of some of our actions.

Postscript to the 1965 Conflict[5]

Despite Bhutto's loud protestations that Pakistan had no hand in the August 1965 infiltrations into Kashmir valley by the trained Pakistani guerrillas under Pakistani military orders, facts which came to light later showed how the whole operation was masterminded by Bhutto and some of the Generals to grab the state of Kashmir. It also showed how preposterous were the accusations against India of having started the war to destroy Pakistan in the name of Kashmir. It is, of course, axiomatic that truth is the first casualty in a war, but there are certain limits to patent falsehoods which no respectable leaders would cross. It had profoundly saddened me at that time that a great and highly cultured leader like Bhutto could resort to telling blatant lies to the whole world. From the memoirs of the Pakistani Generals, we get shocking revelations that the then Pakistani leaders had no such scruples.

Air Marshal Asghar Khan's book *First Round, Indo-Pakistan War 1965* throws a glaring light on the plot hatched by Foreign Minister Bhutto and some of the Generals with the approval of President Ayub Khan. This is what Altaf Gauhar, who was then Secretary in the Ministry of Information, has to say in the introduction to the book about the launching of "Operation Gibraltar" against the Indian state of Kashmir:

> I, too, had been kept completely out of the picture so far as "Operation Gibraltar" was concerned. The first time I heard anything about the operation was on the 25th of July 1965, when Brigadier Irshad requested me to depute a Kashmiri-speaking officer for a broadcasting station which was to operate from Muzaffarabad. . . . A few days later, Brigadier Irshad gave me some more information about the "Operation Gibraltar" and told me that I would be given at least 24 hours notice before the D-Day. . . . I drove down to Rawalpindi and made alternative arrangements to get the "Sada-i-Kashmir" radio off the ground. A few days later, there was a meeting in the Defence Secretary's office where Agha Shahi and

[5]All quotations in this section taken from *Strategic Digest*, July 1984, IDSA, New Delhi and *Strategic Analysis*, May 1986.

> Nur Khan were also present. Shahi was worried that the Foreign Office had not been able to establish a "Revolutionary Council" in occupied Kashmir, and Nur Khan was urging me to publicize the fact that he proposed personally to drop food supplies for the volunteers trapped in Rajauri.

These then were the real facts about the so-called "Revolutionary Council"—which was non-existent—and the so-called "voice of Kashmir" radio, which was being operated, not from anywhere in the state of Kashmir but from a town in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Equally revealing are the observations of Air Marshal Asghar Khan about the aggressive operation launched by Pakistan. He writes:

> I found it difficult to believe that the President, who had always been cautious in his approach to international relations, particularly as they affected our contacts with India, should have agreed to a policy that had the germs of a conflict on a major scale. In the first week of August, we read in the newspapers of the incursion of Azad Kashmir volunteers across the cease-fire line into Indian held Kashmir. As these incursions began to increase in intensity, it became obvious that a major shift had occurred in our policy towards Kashmir.

The views of General Md. Musa, who was the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan army during the 1965 war, are even more damaging in his book *My Version*. He writes:

> The then Foreign Minister Mr. Z.A. Bhutto and Foreign Secretary, Aziz Ahmad, spurred on by Major General Akhtar Hussain Malik, who was the Commander of our troops in Azad Kashmir, pressed the Government to take advantage of the disturbed situation in the Valley and direct the army to send raiders into the Indian-held Kashmir for conducting guerrilla activities there and to help, on a long-term basis, the locals in organizing a movement with a view to eventually starting an uprising against the occupying power. . . .

This advice, according to General Md. Musa, was against the sober professional judgement. He writes:

> The policy makers thwarted the professional assessment and advice on matters having grave military implications because of their miscalculation of the politico-strategic aspects and the over-ambitiousness of a few individuals in the decision-making who

were prompted by their desire to achieve some quick and spectacular results in Kashmir by clandestine operations.

According to Brigadier Abdul Rehman Siddiqui (Retired):

> The collapse of "Gibraltar" was hastily followed up by another ambitious operation "Grand Slam" under the command of the same general officer who had not quite succeeded in carrying "Gibraltar" to the desired conclusion. Unlike "Gibraltar" "Grand Slam" was a regular army operation in support of the Azad Kashmir forces, launched in strength with armour, air force and artillery in support.

Lt. General M. Habibullah Khan Khattak (Retired) blames the Commander-in-Chief General Md. Musa for his failure to oppose "Operation Gibraltar" when the senior military advisers considered it to be dangerous. He writes:

> It was this absence of a clear-cut opposition from his Commander-in-Chief to the operational soundness of Gibraltar that led Field Marshal Ayub Khan to give the go-ahead signal. This was a diabolical plan concocted by the late Mr. Bhutto to get President Ayub Khan to commit the blunder of sending commandos into Indian Kashmir. General Musa, who was repeatedly advised by his general staff not to be a party to such an action, did not have the courage to advise Field Marshal Ayub Khan correctly. Hence, Pakistan landed itself into the trap.

The retired Brigadier Riazul Karim Khan also explains how the operation started and how it led to war between India and Pakistan. He writes:

> General Musa knew that Bhutto used to meet Major General A.H. Malik and some other officers to discuss with them the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. He was given a concrete proposal for enlarged operations in Kashmir with which he did not agree and after its examination recommended that the raids be postponed. . . . General Musa did not stop his officers from mixing with Bhutto or with other senior officers because obviously he knew that the Foreign Minister had got the blessings of the President. . . . He accepted the "Operation Grand Slam" under duress. This was the deliberate thrust in the Chhamb-Jaurian Sector immediately across the cease-fire line on the night of the 30/31st of August 1965 under full control of GHQ. The ultimate aim of this operation was not understood by observers like us because it was now only too

obvious that GHQ had invited India to wage a full scale war against Pakistan, whereas, we were not prepared for it. It was just not possible for Indians to sit and watch and be content with the thought that the operation was only in the disputed territory of Kashmir. . . On the 4th of September, our views were confirmed when Mr. Shastri, the Indian Prime Minister, announced over All-India Radio words to the effect that Pakistan should withdraw its troops back to the cease-fire line otherwise they would be responsible for the consequences and that India would choose the time and place of its counter-attack. . . It was, perhaps, innocent that the belief should have been nurtured at all even after the Indian ultimatum as far back as May of that year, that it would attack Pakistan when and where it chose. There was no question of the sanctity about international frontiers. The war in Rann of Kutch should have given a warning to that effect.

Bhutto himself made the confession of his personal involvement in the 1965 war during an interview in 1972 with one of our leading columnists, Kuldip Nayyar. In the *Sunday* magazine, Calcutta, of July 10, 1983, he gave details of this interview:

The 1965 war was known as "Bhutto's war." I remember when I met General Ayub in Islamabad in 1972, I asked him why he provoked India by sending infiltrators into Kashmir. His reply was cryptic: "Don't ask me, ask Bhutto." Bhutto was Foreign Minister in 1965 and President of Pakistan in 1972. When I met him I told him that General Ayub seemed to blame him for the 1965 war. He did not deny responsibility and argued that Pakistan had to act then because the ordnance factories which India had established had not yet gone into full production and once they did, India would have been too strong to be beaten. He said: "There was a time when militarily, in terms of the big push, in terms of armour, we were superior to India because of the military assistance we were getting and that was the position up to 1965. Now, the Kashmir dispute was not being resolved peacefully and we had this military advantage we were getting blamed for it. So it would, as a patriotic prudence, be better to say, all right, let us finish this problem and come to terms, and come to a settlement. It has been an unfortunate thing," Bhutto adds.

As regards Bhutto's assertion in Dacca that India had been warned by China through the American Ambassador in Warsaw to the effect that if India attacked East Pakistan, China would effectively intervene

on the side of Pakistan, our information was that it was the American Ambassador in Warsaw who had conveyed his Government's warning to the Chinese Government to keep out of the India-Pakistan conflict. An interesting sidelight on this episode is thrown by Altaf Gauhar in his foreword to Air Marshal Asghar Khan's book, *The First Round.* Altaf Gauhar writes: "As the Indo-Pakistan war was reaching its critical stage, a senior foreign service officer K.M. Kaiser, who was a close confidant of Bhutto, approached the American Ambassador K. Macnaughty, to help in preventing East Pakistan being attacked by India."

President Ayub Khan is reported to have told Altaf Gauhar that the American Ambassador met the President one day and said: "Mr. President, it seems the Indians have caught you by the throat; if you want, we could relieve the pressure." Ayub Khan is reported to have replied: "Mr. Ambassador, we do not know who has caught whom by the throat." According to Altaf Gauhar, Ambassador Macnaughty met Ayub Khan again a few days later and suggested that arrangements could be made whereby India would agree not to take any action in East Pakistan, a suggestion which had the support of the Foreign Office. Ayub Khan rejected the suggestion without the slightest hesitation. This confirmed that no American Ambassador could take upon himself to convey any message to India either as a result of the Chinese approach or because of the Pakistan Foreign Office's request for American intercession. It also proves that Bhutto was keen to enlist American support since his seniormost aide, Kaiser, was reported to have approached the American Ambassador.

In the words of Air Marshal Asghar Khan, there was enough provocation for India to attack East Pakistan. On September 7, the Pakistan Air Force claimed from Dacca that it had attacked the Indian air base at Kalaikunda in Bihar and inflicted considerable damage. The equally provocative report from East Pakistan was the attack by the ships of Admiral Ahsan on the Indian vessels, capturing a large number of them with their cargo.

The fact is that East Pakistan was saved not because of any threats of persuasion from any outside power but because of India's firm decision not to attack it. It was well known that All-India Radio, during the conflict, continued to announce repeatedly that India regarded the people of East Pakistan as friends.

6

Observations and Assessments from Moscow as India's Ambassador to the USSR

From October 1966 onwards, I had to follow the developments in India-Pakistan relations from Moscow where I had gone as Ambassador. In my talks with the Soviet leaders, who continued to attach great significance to the Tashkent Declaration, I explained that we were very keen to take all necessary steps as laid down in the Declaration and I had no doubt that once the process of normalization started, there would be much greater goodwill, trust and cooperation between the two countries; but unfortunately, as nowhere laid down in the Tashkent Declaration, the Kashmir issue was being made a focal point for any discussions.

On January 10, 1967, the Soviet Government organized a big meeting to celebrate the Tashkent Declaration. On this occasion, President Ayub Khan sent a message to the Soviet Premier, Kosygin, expressing his disappointment at the non-fulfilment of the Tashkent Agreement blaming India for it. The Pakistan Embassy in Moscow did not participate in the celebration programme.

To cast another shadow on Indo-Pakistan relations an unfortunate accident took place in early February 1967. A Pakistani military reconnaissance aircraft, which had intruded twenty miles into the Indian territory, was shot down by the Indian Air Force in the Ferozepur district, killing the pilot. India lodged a protest that the movements of the plane were suspicious and that the pilot had failed to comply with the warnings. Pakistan rejected this protest against what she called a wanton shooting down of a Pakistani plane. In further correspondence India again explained her point of view, expressed regret for the accident and offered to return the plane wreckage. Hope was also expressed by the Indian side that this unfortunate incident would not affect the efforts to improve Indo-Pakistan ties. Pakistan

continued her protest and demanded damages for the plane and for killing of the pilot.

To me, this accident reflected the mentality of both sides of mutual suspicion, distrust and the innate habit of recrimination. It was none of my business to point out in my capacity in Moscow that even the intruding plane could have been chased back by the IAF planes located in this area without resorting to shooting it down.

This could have been followed up by a strong protest and even with a warning that such intrusions, in future, might lead to shooting down of the planes. On the Pakistani side, again, the tone might have been different expressing regrets over the intrusion due to navigational mistake and demanding apology and reasonable compensation and thus avoiding the arousing of strong public reaction on both sides.

The Indian Government had, however, continued its efforts to persuade the Pakistan Government to start a dialogue and in early January 1967, the Foreign Minister, M.C. Chagla, had discussions with the Pakistan High Commissioner, Arshad Hussain, to find ways of breaking the deadlock. Later, Chagla made another suggestion to Sharifud Din Pirzada, his Pakistani counterpart to consider bilateral discussions for mutual reduction of arms. He also repeated, later , the earlier proposal that a joint body should be set up for a continuing dialogue on all issues of interest to both countries. Simultaneously, Chagla assured Pakistan of India's readiness to resume air services, telecommunications and opening up of border check-posts to allow visits of people between India and Pakistan.

The Pakistani side made the Kashmir issue a precondition for any talks on the normalization of relations. Even on the question of reduction of arms by both countries, Pirzada's reply to Chagla's letter advanced the same arguments. Replying to Pirzada's letter of April 7, Chagla rejected the Pakistani argument that even reduction of arms could only be considered with a simultaneous attempt to resolve the Kashmir dispute. He in return, proposed an official meeting to discuss all questions between India and Pakistan including the Kashmir question but urged for a dialogue between the two Governments.

Obsessive compulsion of the Government of Pakistan to raise the Kashmir issue internationally, even after the commitment of the Tashkent Declaration, was evident when the Pakistan Foreign Office addressed a communication to the UN Secretary General alleging that the situation in Kashmir was grave, the leaders were imprisoned and that there was repression in the state. This was done in spite of the fact that general elections had been held in the state in a free atmosphere and in the presence of foreign journalists. There must have been, as always

in democratic elections, some accusations and counter-accusations between the parties but the elections were fought by the political parties of Kashmir without any intervention from the Government of India.

Quite unexpectedly, I saw in Moscow an intriguing and even disturbing fallout of the Tashkent Declaration relating to Soviet-Pakistan relations. At Tashkent the top Pakistani and Soviet leaders had met for a week and had got to know each other and had developed personal rapport. Whatever the fate of the Tashkent Declaration, each side for its own reasons wanted to develop a close and cooperative relationship. The first such step was the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister, Mazarov, with a parliamentary delegation to Pakistan in 1966 when I had the opportunity to meet him there at the Soviet Embassy reception. This was followed by President Ayub Khan's very successful visit to Moscow in the last week of September 1967. During the discussions, the two Governments agreed to "further strengthen the existing contacts and to expand the sphere of cooperation in political, economic, cultural and other fields" and some concrete plans were decided upon. On Indo-Pakistan relations, the Pakistan President, in his banquet speech, while appreciating Premier Kosygin's role at the Tashkent meeting, asserted that it was the Kashmir issue which was the main stumbling-block to the normalization of relations with India.

A few days later, I met Firubyan, the Deputy Foreign Minister in Moscow. I asked him, considering that Kosygin had been a witness to the discussions leading to the Tashkent Declaration, did he not think it fit to point out to Ayub Khan how the Kashmir question could be brought up to block all steps agreed upon in the Declaration to establish cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between the two countries? Had not they agreed to set the Kashmir dispute aside and resume cooperation and start commercial and cultural communications? He smiled and evasively replied that they would continue to strive for Indo-Pak amity.

In any case, the Soviet Government's main interest at that stage was to get closer to Pakistan by giving generous economic aid and also by supply of arms on which the Pakistan President was very keen. I could also see that, during our discussions in New Delhi in January 1968, when I accompanied Kosygin there, only lip-service was paid to the Tashkent Declaration and we ourselves had no reason to expect anything more. While retaining India's goodwill, the Soviet aim was to establish strong links with Pakistan.

In the middle of 1968, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan army, General Yahya Khan, visited Moscow with a delegation and had discussions for securing military supplies from the Soviet Union. Soon

we learnt that the Soviet Union had promised to give substantial sophisticated military equipment to Pakistan.

In India, the news caused great surprise and concern. To me, the Soviet decision seemed all the more regrettable, when the U.S. State Department had reaffirmed the previous year that it would not resume arms aid to India and Pakistan which had been suspended in September 1965. U.S. officials had explained at that time that the

> prime objective of the U.S. Government had been to encourage a reduction of defence expenditures in the subcontinent and to achieve arms limitation, so that the two countries can resolve their differences and accord an increasing priority in the allocation of their resources to agricultural and industrial development.

I made representation at the various levels but got vague assurances leaving me in no doubt that by this means the Soviets were seeking to increase their strategic influence in Pakistan at the cost of the United States of America and China.

Mrs. Gandhi wrote a letter to Kosygin and India's Commerce Minister, Dinesh Singh, visited Moscow to convey Government of India's concern. During the meeting with the Secretary General, Leonid Brezhnev, India's point of view could not have been expressed more clearly and persuasively than by Dinesh Singh, who had a long experience of international relations. His style of exchanges on this occasion was, as always, marked by dignity, firm exposition of India's stand and gentle persuasion. He paid compliments to the Soviet Union for having brought about the Tashkent Declaration and, thereby, having rendered a unique service to the cause of peace in the subcontinent. The Soviet Union, he suggested, must continue to support the constructive process to which Pakistan was posing difficulties. How could, he asked, the decision to supply lethal weapons to Pakistan help the process of reconciliation between the two neighbours for the initiation of which the Soviet Union could legitimately take credit? India had had a tragic experience of the arms supplied to Pakistan by the United States of America and China and we, therefore, failed to understand the wisdom of the Soviet administration aggravating the situation by its decision also to supply arms. Would it not have been, Dinesh Singh asked Brezhnev, a more appropriate act of statesmanship if the Soviet Government had encouraged some sort of joint ventures between India and Pakistan in the interest of both the peoples by grants or aid instead of inducting more weapons in the subcontinent while the two neighbours were still inimically disposed towards each other?

Unlike Kosygin, who spoke as if reading from a written text and rarely allowed a smile to escape his lips, Brezhnev spoke warmly and enthusiastically with a frequent touch of humour. He tried to assure the Minister that the Soviet Union valued India's friendship and that the supply of arms to Pakistan would not be allowed to undermine our close relations. But whatever vague assurances the Commerce Minister got from the Soviet leaders could hardly satisfy him nor could they dispel our concern over the Soviet decision.

In reply to Mrs. Gandhi's letter, Kosygin reiterated what he had told me about the middle of July. He tried to assure her that they attached great importance to Indo-Soviet friendship and that the Soviet Government would not allow anything to happen which undermined this relationship. While paying tribute to Mrs. Gandhi's leadership and to the peace-loving people of India, he hardly made any direct reference to the Soviet decision to supply arms to Pakistan.

India's reaction could be summed up in the words of Sardar Swaran Singh, Foreign Minister, who informed the Lok Sabha that the Soviet Government, after the Tashkent Agreement, had informed India that they wanted to have friendly relations with Pakistan, which India had welcomed. At the same time, the Soviets had been at pains to assure us that their friendship with Pakistan would "never be at the cost of India." He added: "We have, however, to admit that we have not been able to convince the USSR of the danger to India which is implicit in the supply of arms to Pakistan." The Soviet policy of arms supply to Pakistan continued in spite of the Indian protest.

In further talks with the Soviet leaders, they tried to argue that the supplies of arms would be in the larger interest of preserving peace in the region. Here was the argument of "arms for peace," which we had heard before from another superpower. Obviously, the Soviet Union was entering the game.

There was no lack of other irritants in Indo-Pakistan relations during this period but two of them received special publicity. The first related to the decision of the Pakistan Government to confiscate pre-1965 Indian firms and properties in Pakistan by declaring them as "enemy property" under the Defence of Pakistan Rules. By the end of the year, it announced the public auction of these properties. There were a number of leading industrialists and firms who had had branches in Pakistan till 1965. India had already warned Pakistan that if she persisted in auctioning Indian properties and assets confiscated after the 1965 war, that would be a serious threat to the improvement of relations between the two countries. This was a highly arbitrary and

provocative act by Pakistan to deprive the Indian owners of their assets by a stroke of the pen.

The other protest from India related to the construction of the strategic high road known as the Karakoram Highway linking Gilgit in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir with the Sinkiang Province of China. The reason for India's objection was that the entire alignment of the road passed through Indian territory which was at present under the illegal occupation of Pakistan. Reports indicated that about 12,000 members of the Chinese People's Liberation Army had been inducted into Northern Kashmir to help build the road in that area. As the road was being built secretly, further anxiety was caused that it would serve the purpose of the Chinese military expansionism and would constitute a threat to the peace of the region.

Such protests whether by India relating to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir or by Pakistan relating to the conditions in the state of Kashmir in India were futile exercises put forward with all sorts of legal and constitutional arguments. The fact remained that Pakistan had full control over Pakistan-occupied Kashmir which she called "Azad Kashmir." For that reason, at this stage to question the legality of the Pakistani occupation was practically irrelevant.

Equally irrelevant was to force the issue on the ground that Pakistan could not claim to have ever held general elections to ascertain the popular will of the people of this territory. Even if the elections had been held under the military dictatorship, they could have hardly convinced anybody. Why talk of general elections in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir when the Pakistan Government had not allowed the right of general elections to its people since its inception? All this is beside the point when we are faced with the actual facts.

True, India could argue that the state of Kashmir had had its Constituent Assembly which ratified the accession of the state with India, that it had had frequent general elections and that nobody could question that the Kashmir state, according to the popular decision of its people, is an integral part of India. Pakistanis, however, must as we have seen, continue their protests over the status of Kashmir and the alleged repression in Kashmir. These exercises or protests and counter-protests will continue indefinitely. Nothing, in my view, will change the position of either the state of Kashmir being an integral part of India or the fact of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir being a part of Pakistan unless, of course, there is another major war, which changes the map of the subcontinent. One can only fondly hope that the day will come when the two Governments will accept that the division of Kashmir is a

fait accompli and that any attempt by either party to undo it would mean an all-out war between them spelling disaster for both.

Ayub's Downfall

The 1965 war and the signing of the Tashkent Declaration aroused bitterness against President Ayub for the complete failure of his venture to liberate Kashmir and for his alleged surrender at Tashkent. The pent-up feeling of the opposition leaders, the intelligentsia and the general public against the dictatorial methods of Ayub's military-bureaucratic junta and the socio-economic distress of the people under his corrupt regime resulted in demonstrations against Ayub in various cities which continued off and on.

Bhutto had resigned in 1966 amidst public enthusiasm. This young, shrewd and ambitious politician had sneeringly left the Ayub Cabinet and entertained dreams of organizing his own forum to challenge Ayub's leadership. He, certainly, had the charisma, the mass appeal and political skill. He created the new political party, Pakistan People's Party, and adopted for it a socialist programme. It was he who launched the first major attack on President Ayub and his Government.

The basic reason for the intense and general hostility to Ayub was his arrogant authoritarianism and his disdain for politicians and democratic institutions. His so-called Basic Democracy, which he had instituted in 1960, was nothing short of camouflaged dictatorship. The Basic Democrats, some 40,000 of them in each wing with a total population of about 125 million, elected the National Assembly and the President. They obediently voted for Ayub and his National Assembly and, in return, they received the patronage of the President and his bureaucracy. In 1965-66 I often used to hear in confidence from a number of leading public men that the politicians and the intelligentsia were fed up with Ayub and yearned for popular elections and a parliamentary system so that the nation as a whole could participate in the formulation of the Government's foreign, political and economic policies. The dissidents, however, lived in a state of fear as the intelligence service in Pakistan was ubiquitous and unsparing.

Economic distress, accentuated by disparity, was another factor. No doubt there was a good deal of industrial development and economic progress but it was only a small section of the population such as feudal landlords, big industrialists and top business houses who monopolized this growing wealth. People often spoke about the twenty-two families who controlled the industrial and economic wealth of the nation and they never failed to mention the name of President

Ayub's son Gauhar Ayub, who, they alleged, had built up an industrial empire.

In East Pakistan there was in addition a deep sense of humiliation at the political domination and the blatant economic exploitation of that region..

Throughout 1968, the situation continued to deteriorate with widespread disturbances, demonstrations, strikes and even violence spearheaded by the opposition leaders and by the journalists, teachers, doctors, students, lower middle class and the workers. Ayub tried to deal with these disturbances with stern action leading to many casualties. About September 17, we got the news that Bhutto had been arrested in his hometown at Larkana on the ground that he had been violating the Martial Law regulations. Several other leaders were also arrested during that week.

The continued strikes, demonstrations and violence during November must have been so enervating that in early December, Ayub seemed to be adopting a conciliatory attitude towards the opposition leaders. He made a public statement expressing regret over the recent arrests and explained that the detention of these leaders was necessary to maintain law and order as they were inciting violence. He also warned the people that the "whole nation may have to face turmoil and chaos if the disturbances continue."

By mid-November 1968, Air Marshal Asghar Khan also joined the opposition and condemned the dictatorial methods, the repression, corruption and the administrative incompetence of the regime. In an atmosphere of recurring demonstrations, violence and strikes in East and West Pakistan and in major cities of both the wings, the administration was collapsing and the police were paralysed. It was becoming obvious by the end of 1968, that with the revolutionary determination of the entire nation to oppose Ayub's authority, his days were numbered. Despite the writing on the wall, he still continued to think in terms of suppressing the revolution by the army which was sent to the main towns in both the wings.

Resorting to the usual method of diverting the attention of the people to the so-called danger from India, he said, while addressing a public meeting in Lahore on December 29, "We must always bear in mind the external threat—the enemy with its well-organized 30 divisions will lose no opportunity to invade Pakistan and can do so in a week's time." As against that Air Marshal Asghar Khan, a few days later accused Ayub of not improving Indo-Pak relations because of the vested interests of his regime.

In early January 1969, the opposition political parties jointly formed a Democratic Action Committee to support the agitation against the Government and laid down the condition that there could be no dialogue with Ayub unless he lifted emergency, released all political prisoners and agreed to discuss the procedure for democratic elections and for a parliamentary system of Government. Driven to the wall, Ayub released Bhutto and other opposition leaders and invited them for discussions. At the same time, the so-called Agartala conspiracy case, because of which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and several other leaders had been arrested in East Pakistan, was withdrawn after nearly one year without the Government having been able to prove any allegations. Ayub, however, failed to take advantage of the DAC leaders' offer, and instead of acceding to the national demand, continued with his ill-advised and repressive actions.

By the end of February there were demonstrations, rioting, strikes and arson in all the major cities of the country. The country's administration and economic life were paralysed. Confronted with the revolt of the whole population, Ayub made the following announcement on February 21, 1969: "I shall not be a candidate in the next election. This decision is final and irrevocable." The President then agreed to meet the DAC leaders, gave some sort of assurance of adult suffrage, direct elections and parliamentary system of Government. But the demands and demonstrations seeking his resignation continued to spread.

In East Pakistan the situation had gone beyond control with the general strike and stoppage of all industrial, economic and social activities. Government officials and the police as well as the Basic Democrats lived in fear. Even his military and bureaucratic supporters had started deserting Ayub.

With failing health and paralysis of his administration, Ayub resigned as President on March 25 stating, "It is impossible for me to preside over the destruction of our country. . . It hurts me deeply to say that the situation is no longer under control of the Government. All Government institutions have become victims of coercion, fear and intimidation."

Then the world heard the news that General Yahya Khan, Commander-in-Chief of the Army, had assumed supreme power. Yahya Khan displayed courage in imposing Martial Law in the prevailing conditions of chaos and backed by the army he was able to restore peaceful conditions in the country. At the same time, realizing that he must win the confidence of the people who had been denied the democratic rights and freedom of speech for the past twenty-one years,

Yahya Khan took the earliest opportunity to address the nation to answer their demands. He said: "I wish to make it absolutely clear to you that I have no ambition other than the creation of conditions conducive to the establishment of a constitutional Government. It is my belief that a sound, clean and honest administration is a prerequisite for a constructive political life."

My Visit to Islamabad in July 1969

At the beginning of 1969, I had returned from Moscow and assumed my duties as Secretary to the Ministry with special responsibility for Indo-Pakistan relations. Soon an opportunity arose for me to visit Islamabad, in July 1969, to sign boundary maps in accordance with the award of the Kutch Tribunal settling the boundary dispute on which the two countries had gone to war in April 1965. This was one serious territorial dispute that had been settled to the satisfaction of both Governments.

I took the opportunity to seek Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi's advice on other subjects which I could discuss during this visit. I referred to the statement of General Yahya Khan on April 12 soon after his assumption of the office of the President of Pakistan, in which he had expressed hope of improving relations with India. He had said that he would give utmost importance to the peaceful, equitable and honourable solution of all outstanding problems between India and Pakistan. I suggested to the Prime Minister that my visit could provide an opportunity to sound President Yahya Khan and other officials of the Pakistan Government as to what contacts should be renewed and what machinery should be set up to normalize our relations in various fields broken off since the 1965 conflict. I had particularly in mind the question of resumption of trade and air services and the travel of peoples between the two countries. We could, I suggested, propose a joint machinery, as already envisaged under the Tashkent Declaration. In fact, with the Prime Minister's approval, we had already made a suggestion to this effect early that year.

Mrs. Gandhi advised me to pursue discussions with Pakistani leaders on these matters. She also suggested my carrying a letter from her to President Yahya Khan in which she suggested resumption of contacts and discussion between the officials of the two sides to explore ways of restoring our relations in various fields. One question of particular concern to me was that while we had lifted the embargo on trade with Pakistan on May 27, 1966 when I was High Commissioner to Pakistan, the Pakistani side had not responded to this for the past

three years. Similarly, for the resumption of civil air flights a proposal had been made in 1966 and later in October 1967 without any positive response from the Pakistani side.

I arrived in Pakistan on July 5 and the first two days were taken up in signing several thousand copies of the maps relating to the Kutch boundary by the Pakistan Foreign Secretary and me—a marathon task, indeed. As soon as that was over, I availed of the opportunity to meet the Pakistani leaders, among them President Yahya Khan, Air Marshal Nur Khan, Foreign Secretary Yousuf and a number of other politicians and newspaper editors. The Pakistan Government was very helpful in allowing me to meet such a large number of important personalities. Further opportunity was provided by our High Commissioner, B.K. Acharya, who invited several important Pakistani public men and officials to a reception. In the conversations, the Pakistanis I met, including the officials, showed a keen desire to re-establish contacts at various levels between the two countries. Even the Pakistani newspapers wrote favourably about such a possibility. The impression I got was that there was a congenial atmosphere among the public and the leaders for promoting better understanding, goodwill and cooperation between the two countries.

Even during the meeting with the President, where Foreign Secretary Yousuf, and our High Commissioner were also present, the trend of the conversation gave me hope of some movement forward in improving our relations. The President, pleasant and informal, spoke in a friendly tone. He asked me to thank the Prime Minister for her letter and promised to send her a reply in a few days. He suggested that further exchanges could take place between the officials of the two Governments.

Encouraged by the general trend of our conversation, I raised the question which had been some sort of obsession with me. I suggested to the President, as I had already done with President Ayub in 1966 that, for the posts in international organizations, we should try to have prior consultation between ourselves. Elaborating, I explained that the phenomenon of our two Governments putting up rival candidates for the same post in the United Nations and other international organizations followed by our Ambassadors going about various Chancelleries of the world running down each other's candidate as instructed by their respective Foreign Offices, exposed us to ridicule. Would it not be wiser, I had suggested, if by prior consultation we could agree on sharing such posts by turns so that our Ambassadors in each capital spoke with one voice and supported the same candidate whether Indian or Pakistani? To my surprise, the President agreed

enthusiastically. He said, "Of course, that would be the right way to approach these questions." Yousuf, who was sitting next to the President, and with whom I had had unusually informal personal relations over the past years, smilingly winked at me and then said to his President: "But sir, these are matters which can only be discussed after the basic issues have been settled. These are peripheral matters and must wait for more fundamental differences to be resolved." I was distressed with Yousuf's interjection as I had heard it ad nauseam from Bhutto who was totally opposed to any goodwill and friendly relations with India.

To my surprise, the President immediately went back on his first reaction. His Foreign Secretary was right, he said. This was my first inkling that a serious move was afoot to frustrate any hopes of a dialogue. A couple of days later the President confirmed his changed stand in a press statement in Dacca.

I had found President Yahya Khan a very informal and warmhearted person. Before I left him, he asked the Foreign Secretary to make some arrangements for me to relax for a couple of days after the strain of the past few days. Yousuf, in reply, said that he had arranged two days of holidays for us at the Murree hill station. The President expressed satisfaction and looked at me for approval. I said: "Mr. President, if my wishes could be accommodated, I would rather spend two days in Lahore where I have many friends and where I spent several years as a student and later on visits as District Commissioner." Yahya Khan immediately agreed and asked the Foreign Secretary to arrange a plane to take me to Lahore so that I could spend a couple of days there. He added: "and don't let your police escort chase him here and there. He should be allowed to meet all his friends and plan his programme according to his wishes. Every assistance should be given to make his stay pleasant in Lahore."

It was a happy experience meeting my old friends in Lahore, the warmth of whose friendship was unfailing, as always. They included S.A. Rehman, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Anwar Ul Haq, Judge of the Supreme Court, Basheer Qureshi, a friend of Oxford days who was now Chief Secretary of the West Pakistan Government and Mian Mumtaz Daultana, a friend from college days and now a leading political figure of Pakistan.

President Yahya Khan, in his reply to Mrs. Gandhi's letter a few days later, said that Pakistan was ready for a dialogue for normalization and improvement of relations with India provided the talks encompassed all outstanding issues with a view to finding solutions to them. He added that Pakistan's idea of a joint body to discuss all the

basic issues was conveyed to the Secretary, Kewal Singh, during his visit to Rawalpindi. He concluded: "I do not know if there is any other acceptable approach to the problem of placing India-Pakistan relations on a permanent and friendly basis. This was the spirit in which we discussed matters with Mr. Kewal Singh. This is also the spirit in which I am replying to your letter." In actual fact, the President had not talked to me of his insistence on settling "the basic issues"—implying the Kashmir issue—except that Yousuf, as I already mentioned, had suddenly brought in this phrase which had rather curbed the President's style. Apparently, in later discussions with the President, the Foreign Office and other advisers had persuaded him to insist upon the resolution of the more "basic issues" before dealing with the questions of trade, communications and movement of peoples.

7

Announcement of General Elections by Yahya Khan

By the middle of July 1969, there were indications that the President was keen to announce the programme of general elections to the National Assembly. He appointed the Chief Election Commissioner on July 28, and constituted a civilian Council of Ministers. His far-reaching announcement about the forthcoming elections came in his broadcast on November 28, when he promised that free political activity would be allowed from January 1, 1970, and the general elections would be held on October 5, 1970 (later postponed to December 7). The National Assembly would meet to frame the Constitution during the three months following the elections.

President Yahya Khan also declared that the One Unit, in which all West Pakistan provinces had been integrated since 1955, would be dissolved and each province would have its own Legislative Assembly and Government. This was widely welcomed in the other three provinces of West Pakistan as to them, the One Unit system meant subservience to West Punjab and Punjabi rule. The President's other assurance was that the elections would be held on the basis of one-man, one-vote. East Pakistanis were thus assured of higher representation in the Assembly on the basis of their larger population in place of parity with the Western wing. Each wing was also promised maximum autonomy so long as it did not subvert the integrity and unity of the country. Each wing would exercise control over its economic resources and development.

There were one or two provisions of the Legal Framework Order, which was announced on March 30, 1970, that appeared to reserve certain overriding powers for the President. According to this Order, the National Assembly was to frame the new Constitution within 120 days from the date of its first meeting and in case it failed to do so, it would be dissolved. Further, the constitution framed by the National Assembly would have to be approved by the President; in case of his

rejection the National Assembly would stand dissolved. These seemed highly arbitrary powers but, in the flush of enthusiasm at the announcement of the general elections on the generally acceptable basis, not much criticism was raised against the Legal Framework Order.

We, in India, had reason to entertain high hopes for the future of Indo-Pakistan relations. This was the first time that the Pakistani nation was going to have a democratic Constitution and a representative Government which, one hopefully expected, would work for understanding between the two peoples rather than the past hostile policies and the confrontationist postures of the military dictatorships.

India's Humiliation at the Rabat Islamic Summit

Amidst this hopeful atmosphere, India was in for a shock from President Yahya Khan's behaviour. Even when there was no serious tension or confrontation between the two countries, spurred by Pakistan's innate hostility against India, he created a situation in which the Indian and Pakistani delegations exposed themselves to ridicule at the International Islamic Summit at Rabat in September 1969.

The Secretariat of the Conference had invited twenty-five countries including India, keeping in view that India had the third largest Muslim population after Indonesia and Pakistan. The Government of India sent one of its senior Muslim Cabinet officers, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Minister for Industrial Development, to attend the Conference. The purpose of the Conference was to consider the consequences of the fire that had damaged the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in August and other aspects of the Arab-Israel dispute.

The Indian Minister and his delegation arrived in Rabat on the eve of the Conference. The next day, a few hours before its inauguration, President Yahya Khan protested to the organizers against India's inclusion at the Conference and threatened to boycott it if the Indian delegation participated. The wrangle continued for a couple of hours while the Indian Minister and his delegation waited at their hotel for a signal to attend which never came. Thanks to President Yahya Khan's intransigence and the cowardly submission of the other delegations to Pakistani threats, India was barred from attending the Conference to which she had been formally invited—an embarrassment that was acutely felt in India. I could not fathom the great purpose the Pakistan President was trying to achieve by this gratuitous insult to India. It might have been more statesmanlike for the two leaders from the subcontinent to sit together with others in the Rabat Conference and

cordially discuss questions of interest to all the Muslim countries. The fact that no bilateral Indo-Pak interests were at stake at the Conference made President Yahya Khan's behaviour all the more outrageous. At the Foreign Office, we felt constrained to express resentment against Morocco and Jordan as the former was the host country to invite India and its Foreign Minister had been particularly discourteous to the Indian Minister and the latter had been the only country which actively canvassed for India's exclusion. We decided to withdraw Sardar Gurbachan Singh, our highly competent and suave Ambassador from Rabat and also recalled our Charge d'Affaires from Amman.

The Election Propaganda

The election propaganda in Pakistan started in full swing from January and the Awami League made its Six-Point Autonomy Programme as a sort of referendum for the people of East Pakistan. In West Pakistan, Bhutto's PPP promised economic and social reforms and stood for the unity of the country.

To aggravate the accumulated anger and bitterness of the East Pakistanis against the West Pakistani leadership, a major disaster took place in East Pakistan on November 12 in the form of a cataclysmic cyclone that swept over all the off-shore islands and the coastal districts of East Bengal. Considered as the worst natural disaster in modern history, it resulted in nearly a million deaths and economic devastation over a vast area. The Government of President Yahya Khan, who was in China at that time, displayed poor concern and failed to launch large-scale rescue operations that such a situation called for whereas international relief operations had started immediately on a vast scale. The East Pakistanis were appalled and felt humiliated at this utter callousness. Coming immediately before the elections, such lack of concern further inflamed the persisting East Pakistani resentment against the West Pakistani Government. Sheikh Mujib was unsparing in his attacks on the West Pakistani leaders and said: "While we have army helicopters sitting in West Pakistan, we have to wait for helicopters to come from the other end of the world. Is this why we have channelled 60 per cent of our budget all these years for defence services?"[1]

I have referred to Sheikh Mujib placing the six-point programme as a referendum for the people of East Pakistan. It needs clarification that Sheikh Mujib had more than once affirmed that his demand for autonomy did not imply secession from Pakistan. During the election

[1]*Morning News*, Karachi and *The Times*, London, November 27, 1970.

campaign he had said: "The six points will be realized and Pakistan shall also stay." Later on he again declared: "We want to be brothers of West Pakistanis and not their slaves. We want to become equal citizens and not the Bazaars of West Pakistan."[2]

The Pakistan Government's White Paper dated August 5, 1970, confirmed this: "The six points of the Awami League as publicly announced made no claim to alter or to abridge the sovereign character of Pakistan. Point No. 1 stated that the character of the Government shall be federal and parliamentary." In his election speeches, Sheikh Mujib, repeatedly emphasized that he stood only for provincial autonomy, and not for the disintegration of the country or dilution of its Islamic character. On September 21, 1970, in a public address at Narayanganj, he said, "The six-point programme would be realized and at the same time neither the integrity of Pakistan nor Islam would be jeopardized."

Background to the Disintegration of Pakistan

The East Pakistanis' resentment against the unfair policies of the West Pakistan leaders and the consequential disaffection between the two wings had started soon after the inception of the new State. The Islamic ideology which had impassioned the Muslims of India to achieve Pakistan needed to be supplemented, after independence, with more realistic integrative institutions assuring active and equal political participation by all the regions, and socio-economic justice to all sections of the population. The successive leaders in Pakistan, with their political ambitions and biased policies failed to inspire the confidence of the East Pakistanis as well as that of large sections of the West Pakistan population.

The agitation for the recognition of the Bengali language and the strong opposition to the imposition of Urdu were the first signal of resentment against the arbitrary decisions of the West Pakistani leaders affecting East Pakistan. To proclaim Urdu as the national language of Pakistan, immediately after the birth of the new State, seemed rather odd. Urdu was popularly spoken in North India, specially in Delhi, United Provinces and further South in Hyderabad. The language of the West Punjab was Punjabi and the other languages in West Pakistan were Sindhi, Baluchi and Pashtu. Admittedly, on formal occasions the higher educated classes in the West Punjab spoke Urdu, but among themselves and in their families, their native language was Punjabi.

[2]From Dawn, January 8, 1971, quoted by Md. Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan in *Emergence of Bangladesh and the Role of Awami League*.

Again, no one would question the great contribution made by the renowned Pakistani poet, Dr. Mohammed Iqbal, to the Urdu language and literature for which I myself had profound admiration and from which I drew inspiration. But it had to be recognized that there was a minuscule Urdu-speaking elite in the West Punjab and hardly any in the other Provinces of West Pakistan.

The leaders of West Pakistan were insistent upon adopting Urdu as the single national language of the country ignoring the fact that only 6.0 per cent of the population spoke Urdu, while 54.6 per cent spoke Bengali. Thus, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan speaking against a motion for permitting the use of Bengali in the Constituent Assembly in February 1948, said:

> (the mover) should realize that Pakistan has been created because of the demand of one hundred million Muslims in the subcontinent, and the language of a hundred million Muslims is Urdu. . . Pakistan is a Muslim State and it must have as its lingua franca the language of the Muslim nation . . . . It is necessary for a nation to have one language and that language can only be Urdu and no other language.

On March 19, 1942 Jinnah visited East Bengal and firmly declared at a public meeting at the Dacca Race Course that "Urdu, and only Urdu, shall be the State language of Pakistan." The declaration was immediately criticized. After three days when he repeated it at the convocation ceremony of the University of Dacca in the Curzon Hall, the students raised an uproar. They went on strike demanding that Bengali be recognized as one of the State languages of Pakistan.

Instead of finding a compromise by according official status to the Bengali language also—a language which was spoken by a majority of the Pakistanis and was well known for its beauty and its long literary traditions—the Government resorted to violent measures against the demonstrators including the police firing during the language agitation in 1952. What enraged the East Pakistanis all the more was that they saw in the Government policy imposing Urdu as the West Pakistani design to close the entry of young Bengalis into the higher civil and defence services in which their representation was already minimal. Without proficiency in a language foreign to them, they could not compete for these services.

The two wings of Pakistan, separated by nearly 1,000 miles of Indian territory and having very different cultural and linguistic traditions and economic interests, were devoid of the essential basis for strong national unity. Only the active functioning of democratic

institutions with fair political participation of East Pakistan and a representative national Government which took decisions equitable to every region, and the administrative services accountable to the people's representatives, could have promoted national integration. Pakistan, over the decades of its existence, did not have the wise and selfless leadership striving for such a political and administrative structure. The political authority in Pakistan was wielded, except for the first few years after her independence, by the Punjabi military-bureaucratic establishment supported by the Punjabi feudal landlords. These successive Governments in West Pakistan were opposed to any power sharing with East Pakistan nor were they eager to give them adequate representation in the administrative and defence services. The political manipulations and unjust economic policies of the authoritarian Central Government led to acute feeling of alienation among the East Pakistanis.

Their most serious allegation was their blatant economic exploitation by the Central Government for the benefit of West Pakistan. They pointed out how the economic policies of the Government were decided by the top bureaucrats, who hailed from West Pakistan and who had assumed real authority in the Central Government soon after the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan in 1951. The thrust of these policies, it was alleged, was to strive not for fair and just development of the whole nation but to achieve rapid economic development of West Pakistan at the cost of East Pakistan.

The success of the green revolution and the achievements of the major industrial undertakings in West Pakistan were highly impressive. These were, no doubt, due to the vast financial and material inputs, biased encouragement and political patronage in West Pakistan by the Central Government with little consideration to the crying needs of the largely populated and underdeveloped Eastern wing. Both these sectors were badly neglected in East Pakistan as one could see during visits to Dacca. The East Pakistanis also complained that the industrialists of West Pakistan were given import licences freely and as their industries flourished with substantial exports to East Pakistan, there was increasing concentration of wealth in the Western wing. Even the import licences to set up industries in East Pakistan were mostly given to the West Pakistani industrialists.

The East Pakistani leaders could support their allegations with various studies and reports, including some by the Pakistan Government itself. For example, it was confirmed by the objective international researchers and even by the Pakistan Planning Commission's Report that more than 77 per cent of the funds for

development were allocated to West Pakistan as against 23 per cent to East Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Planning Commission's Report, East Bengal's share of Central Government development expenditure was as low as 20 per cent during 1950-51 to 1954-55. It attained a peak of 36 per cent during the Third Five-Year Plan period 1965-66 to 1969-70. Any fair allocation would have justified a much higher allocation to East Pakistan considering its larger population and its economic underdevelopment.

Even more unjust, according to the East Pakistanis, was the allocation of foreign exchange for economic development with West Pakistan getting 80 per cent of it. Although East Pakistan earned greater foreign exchange through its exports, a major part of the foreign exchange earned was spent on imports into West Pakistan. Economic aid received from foreign Governments was also spent mostly in West Pakistan restricting East Pakistan's share to less than 30 per cent. Most analyses also confirmed that there had been a continuous transfer of resources from East Pakistan to West Pakistan. In consequence, while West Pakistan was making remarkable economic progress, the per capita income in East Pakistan and its GNP was deteriorating. To further exploit East Pakistan as a colony, it was, as alleged by the East Pakistani leaders, used by the Central Government as a captive market for the export of the manufactured products from West Pakistan irrespective of their prices and quality.

Another cause for resentment was that most of the administrative expenditure such as on defence and civil services, which accounted for more than 60 per cent of the budget, was incurred in West Pakistan and benefited the people of that wing who almost monopolized these services. Of the top civil servants in the Pakistan Government, I did not come across during my stay in 1965-66 a single East Bengali officer among the some 40 officers I met or had negotiations with. I do not recall meeting even a junior East Pakistan officer though there were a number of civilian officers who had migrated from India and were occupying high positions. They were part of the Northern Indian cultural and Urdu-speaking fraternity. The East Bengalis painfully felt that there was a deliberate decision to exclude them from positions of authority. Even the Chief Secretary of East Pakistan in Dacca had to be a West Pakistani invariably and so were senior district officers. The East Bengalis would argue that, since they had hardly any representation in the higher echelons of the Pakistan Government, the political and economic interests of East Pakistan could be flouted with impunity.

The position in the defence services was even more humiliating for them. According to the 1955 figures, the number of East Pakistani officers was 7 out of 600 in the Navy, 60 out of 700 in the Air Force and 14 out of 908 in the Army. By 1963, there was a slight improvement in the East Pakistani representation in these services but the proportion still remained miserably low. By the end of the 1960s, out of 48 officers who had since 1947 risen to the rank of Major-General, there was only one East Pakistani. To the East Pakistanis, the nation's army was actually the West Pakistan Army and predominantly Punjabi. It was confirmed by the fact that

> the army which accounted for almost ninety per cent of the manpower in the armed forces, had been recruited primarily from four districts of Northern Punjab—Rawalpindi, Campbellpore, Jhelum and Gujrat—and two districts of N.W.F.P.—Peshawar and Kohat. Approximately sixty per cent of the army consisted of Punjabis and approximately thirty-five per cent of the Pathans. The others supplied the remaining five per cent.[3]

Even more galling to the East Bengalis was the "feeling of superiority", almost disdain, of the Punjabi rulers towards them. I could get some glimpses of it in 1965-66 in West Pakistan as well as during the visits to Dacca. President Ayub himself had no compunction in writing somewhat disparagingly of these highly cultured people:

> As such they have all the inhibitions of downtrodden races and have not yet found it possible to adjust psychologically to the requirements of the new born freedom. Their popular complexes, exclusiveness, suspicion and sort of defensive aggressiveness probably emerge from this historical background.[4]

The First Signs of Rebellion against West Pakistan's Domination

The first resounding challenge against West Pakistan's unjust policies came in the form of the results of the provincial elections in East Pakistan in 1954 when the people routed the Muslim League—a party which could rightly claim to be the architect of Pakistan—thus giving vent to their disgust at this party's subservience of the West Pakistani

[3]Khalid B. Sayeed, *The Role of the Military in Pakistan*, quoted in *Liberation War* by Mohd. Ayub and K. Subrahmanyam.
[4]Ayub Khan: *Friends Not Masters*. p. 187.

political domination which they considered intolerable. The United Front, under Fazlul Haq's leadership, fought the elections on a 21-point programme which demanded much greater autonomy and more equitable policies for East Pakistan. The sweeping victory of the United Front and the ignominious defeat of the Muslim League was illustrated by the fact that the United Front won 223 seats out of 237 Muslim seats and the Muslim League won only 10 seats.

Nothing illustrated better the strong feelings in East Pakistan to free itself from what it considered as the political and economic clutches of West Pakistan than the 21-point programme of the United Front. The few items mentioned below show the areas in which the people of East Pakistan were bitterly opposed to their links with West Pakistan:

1. Complete provincial autonomy for East Bengal, with the Central Government to retain responsibility only for defence, foreign affairs and currency.
2. Bengali to become a State language on par with Urdu.
3. Nationalization of the jute trade and complete freedom from the Centre in regard to the export of jute.
4. Consultation between the Centre and East Bengal on the allocation of foreign exchange.
5. Abolition of existing trade restrictions between East and West Bengal and abolition of the Indo-Pak visa system.
6. Dissolution of the existing Constituent Assembly and its replacement by a directly elected body.

This should have conveyed an unmistakable message to the West Pakistan leaders but in their arrogance of power they did not heed it.

It was a clear assertion of Bengali "nationalism" which should have been noted and a reconciliation sought with it in the larger interest of Pakistan's unity and integrity. The 21-point programme made special reference to trade between East and West Bengal and the abolition of Indo-Pakistan visa system. The East Pakistanis naturally felt that they could import coal and steel from India next door rather than pay very heavy prices for imports from distant countries. They were also anxious to export jute next door to the factories in Calcutta which they were unable to do under the existing trade restrictions imposed by the Pakistan Government. Quite understandably, these demands of the East Pakistanis for open trade between East Bengal and West Bengal and free movement of people between East Pakistan and India caused great concern to the Central Government. These demands were, indeed, a challenge to the Pakistan Government's determined policy to forbid

commercial and cultural exchanges between India and Pakistan. Any lowering of the barriers, according to the Pakistani rulers, could subvert Pakistan's integrity or, at the least, erode their autocratic authority. All the more reason that the Pakistan Government reacted very strongly to Premier Fazlul Haq and his programme.

Instead of seriously considering their genuine grievances and the urge for democratic rights and provincial autonomy by the East Pakistanis, their demands were attributed by the West Pakistan leaders to Indian intrigues and conspiracies. Fazlul Haq's democratically elected Government was soon dismissed on the excuse of its being under the influence of the Indians and the communists and also for being unable to control industrial riots actually instigated by the West Pakistani authorities. This line of propaganda was always used whenever the people of East Pakistan asserted their demands for democratic rights, power-sharing and economic justice. Similarly in 1966, I had seen President Ayub attacking Sheikh Mujib's six-point autonomy programme as a conspiracy by India to dominate that region. He had made strong speeches during his visit to East Pakistan in 1966 and had threatened "to use the language of weapon."

Two other incidents come to mind of East Pakistani opposition to West Pakistani policies. As mentioned before, during the 1965 conflict, there was hardly any concern among the East Pakistanis about the Kashmir question. For one thing, it was too remote for them; besides, their leaders considered it as a plot of the West Pakistani leaders to generate hatred against India and to promote national integration by accusing India of hostility and aggressive designs. They questioned why those in West Pakistan, who passionately pleaded for the rights of the Kashmiris, could not grant democratic rights to their own people. Kashmir, they felt, was just about the size of one of their districts about which so much emotion was being whipped up by the West Pakistani leaders, while they were utterly callous about the democratic urges of their hundred million people.

The other incident was about Bhutto's statement in the National Assembly meeting in March 1966 to the effect that the Chinese Government had, during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan conflict, assured the Pakistan Government to take care of the security of East Pakistan. The East Pakistan leaders, who were painfully aware how their Government had totally neglected their security during the 1965 conflict, were shocked at their Foreign Minister unashamedly telling them that a third country had assumed the responsibility for defending East Pakistan.

The actual confrontation had started with the declaration of the six-point programme of Sheikh Mujib in February 1966. Like Fazlul Haq's 21-point programme, Sheikh Mujib's programme demanded that the constitution of Pakistan must be federal with a parliamentary form of Government and the Legislature directly elected on the basis of adult franchise. The only subjects under the authority of the Federal Government were to be defence and foreign affairs. Even currency for the Federal Government was not acceptable in Sheikh Mujib's distribution of powers. His programme insisted that there should be separate currencies for the two wings, or, if there was to be one currency, there had to be statutory safeguards against the flow of capital from the Eastern wing to the Western wing. The powers of taxation and revenue collection were to be exercised by the two units and not by the Centre which had to be financed by allocations from the two units.

Being acutely aware how the defence personnel were almost entirely Punjabis and West Pakistanis, Sheikh Mujib's autonomy plan demanded the setting up of a militia or paramilitary force in East Pakistan. At the same time, East Pakistan wanted self-sufficiency in defence matters with an ordnance factory and a military academy to be established in the Eastern wing and the Federal Naval Headquarters to be shifted to East Pakistan.

The reaction to the autonomy demand, as already mentioned, was very stern. Soon thereafter Sheikh Mujib and some other leaders were arrested and imprisoned for their demand for autonomy which was termed as challenging the integrity of Pakistan. Later in January 1968, the Pakistan Government charged Sheikh Mujib and thirty-four others with what was known as Agartala conspiracy alleging that they were planning to bring about the secession of East Pakistan with the support of India.

The judicial proceedings relating to the conspiracy were a serious reflection on the political motive of the Government and the judicial standards of the tribunal. Eventually, the Agartala case was withdrawn on February 22, 1969, without being able to prove the charge of conspiracy against the East Pakistan leaders. At this time, widespread strikes and demonstrations had erupted against President Ayub both in East and West Pakistan.

When watching the election propaganda during the 1970 elections and the Awami League's insistence upon the six-point autonomy demand, one could not but recall the background of the events described above and the ominous shadow they could cast on the future political understanding between the two wings of Pakistan.

Election Results and the Post-Election Crisis

Having gone to Bonn as Ambassador, I learnt of the results of the general elections in Pakistan which were held according to President Yahya Khan's promised principles. In East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujib's Awami League, whose election campaign was based on the Six-Point Autonomy Programme, won 160 seats out of 162 seats contested, indicating the unanimous verdict of the people of East Pakistan to achieve autonomy by constitutional means. In addition, the seven women's seats allotted to East Pakistan were automatically won by the Awami League. Thus the Awami League had a total of 167 seats in the National Assembly seats of 313. The Awami League did not, however, secure a single seat in West Pakistan. Similarly, the Pakistan People's Party, under Bhutto's leadership, secured an overwhelming majority in West Pakistan by winning 81 seats but without a single seat in East Pakistan. The remaining 59 seats in West Pakistan were won by nine other splinter parties.

These election results glaringly brought out the harsh reality that the two wings of Pakistan stood for quite irreconcilable ideologies and programmes. The Awami League's programme, approved by the popular verdict, was not at all acceptable to the people in West Pakistan nor did the PPP's programme have the slightest support in East Pakistan. Yet, it fell to these two parties and their leaders to play a decisive role in the framing of the new democratic constitution of Pakistan. Would Mujib and Bhutto be able to display the necessary wisdom, courage and spirit of accommodation to achieve consensus, instead of, what seemed to be, an impending confrontation between the two wings? They had the heaviest responsibility to build up truly democratic institutions and an accountable and efficient administrative structure for the first time in the history of Pakistan. Besides, if the President had hoped, as some thought he did, that two or three political parties would emerge in East Pakistan as a result of the elections and that he could then use his authority and some manipulation to work out a constitutional compromise to his own liking, that option was absolutely closed to him.

President Yahya Khan, I hoped, would play a positive role. I had been impressed by the manner in which he had so far fulfilled his pledge to the Pakistani nation of holding fair elections on the principle of one-man, one-vote. True, President Yahya Khan had reserved to himself, according to the Legal Framework Order of 1970, overriding powers for the final constitutional charter, which provision seemed

highly undemocratic. But the same could, in the actual circumstances, prove beneficial in imposing formulations which reconciled and harmonized the conflicting views of the two political parties in the national interest and thus securing a healthy future for democracy in Pakistan. Yet, I could not help recalling my meeting with him in July 1969, which had not convinced me that I was talking to a wise and upright person with some honest and independent views which he could express with frankness and self-assurance.

The strength of the other political parties in the National Assembly could have no significant impact in tempering the confrontation in case it did develop between the two wings. What was ominous was that the Awami League, having an absolute majority in the National Assembly, did not have to moderate its autonomy programme to accommodate any other party.

The post-election statements of the leaders of the Awami League and the PPP were disconcerting. The former declared his intention to exercise his democratic right, as the leader of the majority party, to form the Government while the latter insisted upon his right to approve any constitutional decisions as his was the second largest party and represented the Western wing for which the Awami League could lay no claim.

One would have thought that the President would invite the two party leaders jointly for informal talks, and, thereby, prepare the ground for rapprochement between their conflicting points of view, although he did have separate talks with both. Nor did Sheikh Mujib take the prudent initiative of visiting West Pakistan to meet President Yahya and, if it were possible, even Bhutto and some leaders of the minority parties. Later, when Yahya himself invited Mujib in the first week of February to come to Rawalpindi, he refused to oblige the President. I had felt that with his visit to West Pakistan and his talks with the leaders of the minority parties, who were not so averse to his six-point programme, Mujib would have projected himself as a national leader with his concern for both the wings of Pakistan.

Watching the irreconcilable attitude of Mujib and Bhutto in their public statements, Yahya thought it fit to meet the two leaders individually. He went to Dacca on January 12 and his meetings with Mujib ended on a positive note on both the sides. In regard to the six points, Mujib indicated that there would be flexibility in their implementation and that the cooperation of the West Pakistan leaders would be solicited. Mujib also assured Yahya of protecting the corporate interests of the Pakistan army. Yahya went to the extent of

declaring that Mujib would be the next Prime Minister.[5]

Immediately on return, Yahya went to Bhutto's hometown Larkana. During the talks, Bhutto insisted, as before, that consensus on constitutional issues must be reached before the meeting of the National Assembly as otherwise Mujib would bulldoze his constitution at the meetings. Bhutto also argued that in discussions preceding the National Assembly, he would be able to protect the interests of West Pakistan and of the armed forces.[6]

On Yahya's persuasion, Bhutto visited to meet Mujib from January 27 to 30. The talks did not at all help in better understanding between the two for future cooperation. As Mujib later put it: "he was incensed at Bhutto's arrogance and presumptuousness, at his cavalier attitude towards a constitutional solution." Mujib indicated that instead of discussing constitutional issues, Bhutto wanted to discuss Ministerial posts which he demanded as a matter of right.[7]

All the time, Bhutto was against the early convening of the Assembly as he had hoped to form a united front of all the parties in West Pakistan in which he failed. Mujib, on the other hand strongly criticized the President for the delay in convening the National Assembly.

In this situation, President Yahya Khan announced on February 13, 1971 that the inaugural meeting of the Constituent Assembly would take place in Dacca on March 3. A couple of days later Bhutto declared that his party would boycott the inaugural session unless there was a commitment that his party would have a decisive say in the proceedings of the Assembly. His words were; "We cannot go there only to endorse the Constitution already prepared by a party and to return humiliated."[8] In fact, Bhutto had repeatedly insisted that the constitutional issue must be settled before the meeting of the National Assembly and that he would not sit in the opposition and PPP must be a part of the Coalition Government.

His call for boycott was unanimously accepted by the elected representatives of the PPP on February 21. As against that, the other parties from West Pakistan with the exception of the Muslim League (Qayyum) had decided to attend the opening session of the National Assembly.

[5] Richard Sisson and Leo Rose: *War and Secession*, p. 63.3.
[6] Ibid., p. 68
[7] Ibid., p..70.e p. 70.
[8] Ibid., p. 78

In view of the PPP's boycott, President Yahya Khan announced on March 1, 1971, the postponement sine die of the inaugural sesssion of the Constituent Assembly. This was strongly resented in Dacca. The spontaneous demonstrations on a large scale that took place there led to firing by the security forces resulting in many casualties. Sheikh Mujib condemned the President's announcement as giving a veto to the minority party to disallow the meeting of the Constituent Assembly and obstruct the democratic process of Constitution making.

To protest against the President's decision, Sheikh Mujib announced total non-cooperation with the administrative authorities and observance of six days of complete strike all over East Pakistan which meant the closure of schools and colleges, Government offices, judicial courts, all means of transport and communications and industrial and commercial organizations. At this stage, to explore the remote possibility of a rapprochment with the Awami League leaders and to gain time for full preparation for the inevitable contingency, President Yahya Khan announced on March 6 that the Constituent Assembly would be convened on March 25. Sheikh Mujib in reply demanded that the martial law be lifted, military forces be withdrawn to the barracks and that there should be immediate transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. As regards the framing of the Constitution, the discussions, he suggested, could take place later on the dates proposed by the President. Knowing the plans of the West Pakistani military junta, Sheikh Mujib also demanded immediate cessation of the military build-up and heavy inflow of military personnel from the Western wing.

In any case, by this time Sheikh Mujib further declared that the people of East Bengal would continue their *hartal* and their non-violent non-cooperation which would include no payment of taxes and no obedience to the administration's orders. The East Bengali non-cooperation went to the extent that when General Tikka Khan came to Dacca from West Pakistan to take over as Governor and Chief Martial Law Administrator, the Chief Justice of Dacca refused to administer the oath of office to him. The reports indicated that, as the days passed, the whole administration was being run by Awami League leaders with the help of the East Bengal civil servants.

Curiously enough, according to press reports, Mujib's demand for transfer of power in East Pakistan found favour with Bhutto who wanted the Government authority to be similarly transferred to the majority party, i.e. the PPP, in West Pakistan. Though some West Pakistani leaders of opposition parties criticized these proposals, this might have been a wiser first stop to start the democratic process.

President Yahya Khan, if he were sincere, could have later played a conciliatory role for the constitutional framework. The tone of the President's announcement of March 6 was, however, not in the least pacificatory towards the East Pakistani leaders. On the contrary, he accused them of being irresponsible and intransigent and of inciting revolt. He even held out a threat to them saying that he would never allow any people to challenge the absolute integrity of Pakistan.

President Yahya Khan's Negotiations at Dacca and the Military Crackdown in East Pakistan

Then came the news of President Yahya Khan's arrival in Dacca on March 15, accompanied by a team of senior advisers with the ostensible purpose of political negotiations with Sheikh Mujib. Later, Bhutto and some other leaders also joined in the discussions. Were these long-drawn-out negotiations really a serious effort to find a compromise solution between the Awami League's demand for autonomy and President Yahya's determination to preserve "absolute integrity" or were they, on the contrary, a ploy to buy time to build up enormous military strength to bring the 75 million people of East Pakistan to subjection and punish them for having dared to take over the administration of East Bengal? It was quite obvious by this time that the Government of East Bengal was being run by the Awami League leadership in defiance of the Central Government.

Although the reports reaching me in Bonn at that time laid more stress on military build-up, I found a very detailed and authentic description of the actual discussions in Richard Sisson and Leo Rose's book *War and Secession*, which are based on a very thorough research. It shows how the subjects of discussions between Yahya, Bhutto and Mujib included formation of an Interim Government, distribution of power between the Centre and the Provincial Governments, including the distribution of economic power, and setting up Constituent Committees of the National Assemblies to lay down special provisions for each province. Even as late as March 24, a definite impression was given that the final agreement had been arrived at. In fact, it was expected by the Awami League leaders and the foreign press that the final decision based on the autonomy of East Bengal would be announced within a few hours. Some reports even indicated that Mujib had agreed to the formation of a National Coalition Government with representatives of Awami League, PPP and the National Awami Party.[9] Otherwise too, it seemed quite possible to resolve the basic differences on the six-point programme.

[9] Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose: *War and Secession—Pakistan, India and the Creation of Bangladesh* (1990), p. 116.

As is well known, Mujib had assured President Yahya on this in their meeting in the middle of January and Bhutto had also accepted Mujib's explanation of most of the six points. The leaders of the West Pakistani minority parties had also been convinced of "Mujib's sincerity and commitment to show reciprocity and to accommodate alternative points of view in the Constitution making process."[10]

What made a compromise impossible was intense mutual distrust between the major parties. Bhutto was certain that Mujib on assumption of office as Prime Minister with a strong parliamentary majority would pursue policies against the core interests of West Pakistan with the objective of rectifying the inequalities of the past. This was also the fear of the armed forces which Bhutto exploited. Mujib was opposed to Bhutto's demand for a coalition and was convinced that the latter with his political ambitions, would resort to any means to destroy the Awami League Government and capture power with or without the support of the armed forces. Mujib became more and more convinced of the collusion between Bhutto and Yahya and some of his colleagues in the final stages talked of "confederation" rather than a "federation."

Some reports from Dacca attributed the final breakdown of talks to Bhutto and suggested that he, with his secret contacts with the military junta and sharing their predilections, decided to end the negotiations abruptly. These highly uncharitable reports attributed to Bhutto the design to ensure the military crackdown and the possible downfall of President Yahya.

Having further reinforced, during this period of so-called negotiations the already overwhelming military power, the orders were given by the President to the military commanders to crush the East Bengali revolt brutally. The military crackdown started on the night of March 25, as President Yahya Khan took off for Islamabad. Next day, in a broadcast, he announced that he had given orders to the army to do its duty and re-establish the Central Government's authority which had been challenged by the treasonable acts of Sheikh Mujib and other Awami League leaders.

Thus started the military operation by the Pakistan army in Dacca on the night of March 25. Sheikh Mujib and some other leaders were arrested and a reign of terror was let loose in Dacca and Chittagong, the immediate victims being the East Bengali military and police officers, Awami party members, students, professors, other intellectuals and the Hindus.

[10]Ibid., p. 86.

According to the reports, nearly a thousand people were killed in the first twenty-four hours. From Dacca and Chittagong, the army spread out all over the major towns of the province. In the coming months, with the unspeakable brutalities being inflicted on the innocent people in towns and villages, streams of refugees started pouring into India. Against heavy odds, the East Bengali Regiment, East Pakistan Rifles, other security forces and the young resistance fighters continued to oppose the Pakistan army which was well equipped with tanks and highly sophisticated weapons. They also used the air force to bomb the rebellious groups and towns. The bravery and the sacrifices of the East Bengali people in their resistance further enraged the Pakistan army who indulged in large-scale massacre, rape and other atrocities in the rural areas all over the province.

To me in Bonn, all this sounded utterly incredible of the armed forces of Pakistan brought up in the highest traditions of self-discipline, humane considerations and civilized behaviour. But the reports from the foreign press correspondents continued to confirm the worst possible brutalities.

As Peter Preston of the *Guardian* put it (March 29, 1971): "Yahya has taken a move against autonomy and has made it into a revolution . . . It is an act of a mindless sergeant major."[11] Much later, even Bhutto termed the brutalities of the Pakistan army in East Pakistan as a "nightmare of fascism."[12]

On April 10 Bangladesh's leaders proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh and later, on April 17, a National Government was constituted at a ceremony in a place called Baidyanathtala in Kushtia district. Syed Nazrul Islam was designated as the Vice-President of the Government.[13]

The Chinese took this occasion to hold out a warning to India. Chou En-lai was reported to have reassured Pakistan in his letter of April 12, 1971:

> Should Indian expansionists dare to launch aggression against Pakistan, the Chinese Government and the people will, as always, firmly support the Pakistan Government and the people in their just struggle to safeguard its State sovereignty and national independence.

[11]Anthony Mascarenhas in the *Sunday Times*, June 13, 1971.

[12]See Bhutto's book *The Great Tragedy* and the White Paper "The Crisis in East Pakistan"—official record August 5, 1971.

[13]Md. Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan: *Emergence of Bangladesh and Role of Awami League. League*.

Mrs. Gandhi's Visit to West European Countries and the USA

In the middle of October 1971, I got a message in Bonn from the External Affairs Ministry to say that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, would be visiting Bonn on November 10. It was a part of her official visits to some West European countries and the USA to meet the Heads of Government and other leaders with a view to acquainting them with the gravity of he situation in East Pakistan and on India's frontiers. The reports from India and the foreign press in the preceding weeks had conveyed mounting evidence of the Pakistan army's continued atrocities against the civilian population and the clashes with the guerrillas of the Mukti Bahini who were apparently getting more confident and successful. By now there was serious tension on the India-East Bengal frontier with the two armies facing each other and with some eight million refugees huddled in camps all along India's bordering states, and some 30,000 more continuing to arrive every day.

It seemed really daring for the Prime Minister of India to leave the country at this explosive stage and to seek the good offices of foreign Governments for some peaceful settlement of the Bangladesh tragedy when the time for such a settlement had, it seemed to me, long since past. How could one expect the leaders and the people of Bangladesh to consider any peaceful settlement with Pakistan after the large-scale genocide by the Pakistan army during the past six months? The only crime of these 75 million people was their yearning for complete autonomy, now independence, for which they had given a clear verdict during the democratic elections held by President Yahya Khan. The entire population of East Bengal had been suffering the worst brutalities of the Pakistan army of which the whole world was well aware through the foreign press reports. The sacrifices the East Bengalis and the undaunted guerrilla resistance against the highly armed forces of Pakistan were at last proving successful. The only solution acceptable to them would have been immediate evacuation of the Pakistan army leaving their duly elected leaders to shape, as best they could, the destiny of this devastated and ravaged land.

It also seemed highly improbable that any of the Western leaders would have the objectivity and the boldness to support such a proposition as each would be motivated by his Government's own national and strategic interests. There was, rather, the danger that the leaders of the countries to be visited would regard the grave situation as

an Indo-Pakistan crisis and they would put pressure on the Prime Minister of India to exercise restraint and strive mutually with Pakistan to reduce tension. They would insist upon maintaining the integrity of Pakistan to which a death blow had already been dealt by President Yahya Khan by first, not honouring the verdict of the elections, and later, by unleashing his army to crush mercilessly the people of East Pakistan, to destroy their economy and specially to kill their local leaders and their educational and cultural elite.

At this juncture, the Government of India was being constantly pressed with strong national consensus to recognize the Bangladesh Government and to support the Bangladeshi struggle for complete independence. The Mukti Bahini guerrillas had already been successful in capturing some strategic posts, and the Indian army was facing the Pakistani forces on the Bangladesh frontier where the tension was high. Whether for reasons of its security or with a view to relieve the Indian pressure on the East Pakistan frontier, the Pakistan Government had advanced its forces to the Indian frontier in the West and India had done likewise after some waiting. The two armies were thus confronting each other on both the frontiers. Could not the visit to the Western Heads of Government, in this situation, cause embarrassment to India and a serious setback to the Bangladesh struggle? One or two Governments might even use the occasion and the intervening period to support and strengthen President Yahya Khan's position both publicly and secretly to humble India.

Not that India had not been mindful in the past of keeping the Western leaders fully informed of the Pakistan army's genocide in East Pakistan and the intolerable situation created for India by the flood of refugees. Only a few months earlier, the Indian Minister for External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh, had visited several Western capitals and Moscow to explain to these Governments the gravity of the situation and to impress upon them the desirability of working out a political solution acceptable to the people of Bangladesh after stopping this ruthless military repression. He had also drawn their attention to the influx of millions of refugees into India which was creating an intolerable situation for India and was causing serious political, economic and social tensions on her frontiers.

At the same time, I had known from my personal experience of Mrs. Gandhi's leadership, as seen by me during the past five years in my capacity as Ambassador to Moscow and later as Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry, that her political instincts were infallible and she displayed amazing courage and calm even when faced with overwhelming challenges. Above all, her style of communication with

its dispassionate persuasiveness and dignified composure always won the admiration of her interlocutors except those who were offended by her upright attitude which was, however, never lacking in courtesy and suavity. This I had noticed during the visit of President Richard Nixon to New Delhi in 1969 and his talks with the Prime Minister. In Mrs. Gandhi's frank exchanges marked by dignified self-assurance and poise, the President found little trace of ingratiation to which the leader of a superpower seemed accustomed nor did he find in India such big receptions and public demonstrations of welcome which were organized in Pakistan by President Ayub, the military head of Pakistan, who had every reason to fawn upon President Nixon for the generous economic and military aid that had been doled out to Pakistan over the years by the U.S. Administration.

Recognition of Bangladesh Government

Even before Mrs. Gandhi arrived in Europe, the question that intrigued me greatly was whether India was going to accord recognition to the new Government of Bangladesh which had declared its independence on March 26. Within a fortnight, during a debate in the Rajya Sabha on April 7, the members unanimously urged the Government of India to accord diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh. A few days later the Government of Bangladesh made an appeal to the international community to recognize the new State but there was no response from any quarter and even the Government of India, in spite of the strong national demand, did not take any decision on that. Again, in the middle of June, a non-official resolution was moved in the Lok Sabha requesting the Government of India to accord recognition to the new State which, it was argued, would be in accordance with the nation's commitment to the sacred principle of freedom, democracy and secularism. This, the members stressed, would also put an end to the savage genocide that was being committed in Bangladesh. Mrs. Gandhi summed up the Government's position in the following words:

"The Bangladesh problem had to be viewed in an overall perspective and the time for granting recognition was not yet ripe. The Government was watching over the situation and would take action at the appropriate time."

Viewing the question from abroad, and mindful of the international implications of such a step, I felt that the decision of the Prime Minister not to accord diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh in a hurry was fully justified. The prevailing political situation on the subcontinent and the international principles involved in the recognition of a new State

required a much more cautious approach. One had to remember that in the first six to eight months after the military crackdown in East Bengal, it was the struggle of the East Bengalis for independence from their mother country, Pakistan. It was, therefore, an internal conflict between the Government of Pakistan and its Eastern Wing. India's "recognition" would have meant support to the East Bengali struggle which would have been rightly branded as an intervention in Pakistan's internal affairs and supporting the civil revolt in that country. Pakistan would have rightly raised the issue internationally and pointed out that, instead of the conflict being within Pakistan, it had become a war between India and Pakistan as India had started supporting and abetting her disintegration. I had no doubt that there would have been strong adverse reaction internationally to India's recognition of Bangladesh.

By not recognizing the Bangladesh Government, India could rightly appeal to world leaders that it was an internal conflict of Pakistan and all international pressure should be exerted on the leaders of West Pakistan to work out a political solution in consultation with the elected representatives of East Bengal. India could rightly stress that it was not an Indo-Pakistan conflict and India would resent being equated with Pakistan in the crisis. Earlier recognition by India, which would have naturally implied support to the Bengalis' struggle, would have justified Pakistan launching an attack against India on any front on the ground that India had already declared war against Pakistan.

Results of Mrs. Gandhi's Discussions with West European Leaders

Brussels was Mrs. Gandhi's first halt where she had talks with the Prime Minister Eysken and his Cabinet colleagues. She also addressed the Royal Institute of International Relations and held a press conference.

As a result of discussions between Mrs. Gandhi and Belgian leaders, the Belgian Government took an immediate decision to stop all economic aid and sale of arms to Pakistan and agreed with the Indian Prime Minister about the urgency of political settlement between the Islamabad Government and the elected leaders of East Pakistan. The Belgian Government also offered generous contribution to the refugee fund.

In Austria also, Mrs. Gandhi received a very friendly understanding. The Austrian leaders shared India's anxieties and were firmly of the view that, instead of the military repression, peaceful conditions must be restored in East Bengal in consultation with their

elected representatives so that the refugees could go back to their homes in safety.

In Britain, the initial reaction of Prime Minister Heath, and his Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas Home, was to advise restraint to India and to suggest the induction of UN observers on the border. The Indian Prime Minister made it plain that the posting of UN observers on both sides of the border to supervise refugee movement was equating India with Pakistan. What was there to supervise when the real problem related to the brutalities of the Pakistan army which were driving millions of refugees into India and had created tension along the India-East Bengal frontiers? Her reply to the advice about India exercising restraint must have been what she said later publicly at the India League meeting: "I do not think any people or any Government could have shown greater restraint than we have in the face of such tremendous provocation. But where has this restraint taken us? We have not gotten any nearer to stability. On the contrary, things are steadily getting worse."

Another suggestion reportedly made by the British leaders was the withdrawal of troops by both sides to which Mrs. Gandhi's reply was that so long as there was civil war in Bangladesh, with the Pakistan army continuing to indulge in brutalities and mass murders and with more than eight million refugees on India's Eastern borders causing social, economic and political tensions, and a stream of refugees daily pouring into India, a sense of insecurity would continue along the borders and India could not take the risk of withdrawing her troops. The presence of Indian troops near the frontiers was purely a defensive measure.

She stressed to the British leaders, as she had stated while addressing the meeting of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at the Chatham House, that there must be talks between the Pakistani military regime and the elected leaders of East Bengal with a view to find a political solution to the crisis. There was no substitute for that.

On the Indo-Soviet treaty, she explained that the treaty did not conflict with India's policy of non-alignment. It was a consultative arrangement and not a military pact. She further clarified that, strictly adhering to her policy of non-alignment India would not grant bases to the Soviet Union.

In reply to a question regarding the guerrillas operating from India's borders with East Bengal, she explained: "It was impossible to seal the border for understandable reasons in dealing with those who are fighting for their freedom against a well-armed force of 70,000

Pakistani soldiers. India would also not like to do so for humanitarian reasons. India had full sympathy for their fight for freedom."

A portentous expression, though used euphemistically by Mrs. Gandhi, conveyed India's clear warning to the leaders in the United Kingdom and other countries visited by her. She said that, if the international community did not exert immediate and effective pressure on the military regime in Pakistan to ensure the early return of the refugees, a situation would soon arise which would "compel India to act in her national interests." The implications of this notice could not have been missed, i.e., that India would recognize Bangladesh as a sovereign independent State and would cooperate with her to alleviate India's burden of refugees and to deal with the tension on her borders. She was even more explicit during her speech at the India League when she said that "though India favoured peace, there is such a thing as national interest and we cannot allow our security to suffer. . . I feel I am sitting on the top of a volcano. I honestly don't know when it is going to erupt. I cannot prophesy what will happen or how we are going to deal with it."

By the end of the week, there were reports of a shift in the position of the British leaders and their acceptance of the urgent need for a political settlement through negotiations with the elected leaders of East Bengal to avert the looming confrontation. They no longer harped on the posting of UN observers and withdrawal of Indian troops.

Visit to USA

From London Mrs. Gandhi reached New York on November 3 and had detailed exchange of views with President Nixon and his advisers, in Washington, apart from addressing some other meetings. One had noticed complete insensitivity on the part of the Nixon Administration to the fate of the 75 million East Bengalis subjected to the worst brutalities, to the massacres in East Bengal, and to the difficulties faced by India as a result of the infiltration of nine million refugees. On the other hand, it seemed that, instead of curbing the military regime of Pakistan, Washington had indirectly supported genocide operations by sending arms to the military regime continuously and, according to some, clandestinely.

So far as the American public opinion was concerned, considerable awareness had been aroused not only by the day-to-day reporting by the American press of the Pakistani military barbarities all over East Bengal but more so as a result of the visit of Senator Edward Kennedy to the refugees' camps in the middle of August. His noble and

humanitarian gesture in visiting various refugee camps in West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, facing rain, slush and mud, evoked tremendous admiration for him in India. Speaking at a reception in his honour at the Central Hall of Parliament in New Delhi, he described "the dimensions of this problem of human disaster" and assured that hundreds of thousands of his countrymen shared his feelings over this tragedy. Even before his departure from Washington, Senator Edward Kennedy was highly critical of the U.S. Administration for its military supplies to Pakistan which were being used to crush the democratic urges of those people and to force them to seek refuge outside East Bengal.

President Nixon, a few days earlier, had expressed his opposition to a recommendation by the House of Representatives Committee suggesting the cutting off of economic and military aid to the West Pakistan Government until the situation in East Bengal returned to normal. Curiously enough, the argument advanced by the President was that the cutting of economic and military assistance would be counter-productive and the best way to influence the events was to continue economic assistance.

Even as early as August 1, 1971, the *International Herald Tribune* had quoted the following words of the *Washington Post*:

> In Pakistan, the world is witnessing a holocaust unmatched since Hitler and "witnessing" is the operative word. While hundreds of thousands have died and millions have fled, the world has done little but look on in paralysed horror. . .
>
> American policy is for Americans, even more regrettable. For "strategic" reasons, which come down to no more than an outmoded habit of military alliance with Pakistan, the United States has kept up a flow of arms and has asked Congress for new economic aid (so far denied), all this under the pretext of gaining a friend's leverage in order to steer the Pakistanis back on a moderate course. There has not been a whit of evidence, however, that the Pakistanis have paid any heed to whatever American urgings may have been privately conveyed. On the contrary, the outpouring of refugees continues, at upward of 20,000 a day, and the United States is widely blamed for facilitating it.

Senator Kennedy had said that the American people were distrustful and perplexed that on the one hand America shipped arms supplies to the Government of West Pakistan which were being used for military suppression of the East Pakistanis and, on the other, it gave relief to the refugees who were forced to flee. He described the situation in East

Bengal as one of "the great human tragedies and disasters of modern times". He said that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's only crime was that he won an election, that his secret trial violated any concept of international law and that he must be released. He asked how the refugees could go back to their homes in the face of Pakistani atrocities and complete lack of any sense of security. Senator Kennedy was the first American leader to arouse the liberal consciousness of the American leaders and the American people. One could already see the gulf between U.S. Administration and American public opinion.

According to the dispatches received from Washington, the U.S. President and his advisers counselled Mrs. Gandhi to exercise restraint in the highly tense situation and expressed the hope that India would withdraw her troops from the frontiers. Mention was also possibly made about the induction of UN observers. Mrs. Gandhi must have given the replies on the same lines as she had done in London. About the troops withdrawal, Mrs. Gandhi explained that the Indian troops were deployed near the border only after the Pakistani authorities had advanced their troops all along the frontiers and from the Indian side it was purely a defensive measure. India could not ignore this risk to her security in view of the past experience of Pakistani aggressions of which the U.S. Government was well aware. Reports also indicated that U.S. leaders wanted Mrs. Gandhi to enter into a dialogue with President Yahya Khan as if the crisis was between India and Pakistan. Mrs. Gandhi could not have but declined to be equated with Pakistan by pointing out that the conflict was really between Pakistan and Bangladesh and it was Pakistan which had created the greatest human disaster in history by her military onslaught in East Bengal. It was for the Pakistan President to approach the elected representatives of Bangladesh to come to an understanding to find a solution. While understandably trying to support Pakistan's unity and integrity even at this irretrievable stage, the U.S. Administration dropped some suggestions about a loose confederation between the two wings of Pakistan.

Mrs. Gandhi pointed out that the Bengalis had never sought freedom until the army crackdown on March 25, and since then the situation, in her view, had changed because of the genocide by the Pakistan army in which more than a million people had been murdered. However, she made it clear that India would not be so presumptuous as to suggest or rule out any solution. The political settlement had to be worked out in discussions between President Yahya Khan and his advisers on the one hand and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other elected representatives of East Bengal on the other. It was for them to decide

what sort of arrangement, including a loose confederation, they would like to have. In spite of what Mrs. Gandhi said, it seemed impossible, after the deep wounds which the Pakistani military junta had inflicted on the East Bengalis, that there could be any chance of their agreeing to anything short of complete independence.

According to some reports, the U.S. Administration had claimed credit for having exerted pressure on Yahya Khan to install some sort of civilian Government in East Bengal. Yahya Khan had nominated a civilian Governor, Dr. Malik, a stooge of the Pakistan regime, and had got elected more than twenty of his supporters to the Assembly through rigged elections after having arbitrarily declared vacant the seats duly won by the Awami League representatives in the general elections. This hoax, whatever the U.S. Administration's satisfaction with it, showed that President Yahya Khan was not honest in finding a solution acceptable to the leaders of East Bengal.

Almost all the reports from Washington indicated that President Nixon's Administration was shutting its eyes to the gravity of the situation and was not inclined to use its persuasion for a political solution of the East Bengal crisis. In fact, it appeared to be determined to support President Yahya Khan in spite of his suppression of democracy and the carnage perpetrated by his army in East Bengal. One almost got the impression that the Administration's attitude was biased against India in the rapidly deteriorating situation, almost to the extent of encouraging Yahya Khan in his stupid policies and incidentally to humble India if possible.

Speaking at a dinner at the White House, Mrs. Gandhi again referred to the magnitude of the refugee problem, and continued:

> Imagine the entire population of Michigan State suddenly converging on New York State, and imagine the strain it would cause on the Administration and on services such as health and communications and on resources like food and money—this not in conditions of affluence, but in a country already battling with problems of poverty and huge population. . . From those who value democratic principles we expect understanding and, may I add, a certain measure of support. . . Our people cannot understand how those who are victims and who are bearing a burden and have restrained themselves with such fortitude should be equated with those whose action has caused the tragedy. . .

There were a few very friendly remarks of President Nixon which attracted particular attention. For example, referring to the Indo-

American friendship, the President said that it was "based on bigger and more profound morality".He also made appreciative remarks referring to India and U.S. being the great democracies having "common ideals, devoted to freedom of people and international peace." These were certainly heart-warming references from the great leader of a great democracy. But in actual practice at that moment, the great American leadership, in my view, failed to meet the supreme requirements of morality and humanity while supporting dictator Yahya Khan, whose army had been responsible for the worst massacres in history. Again, while acknowledging with gratitude the President's references to the two great democracies having common ideals devoted to freedom of people and international peace, one could not but feel that the actual Amercian policies in Pakistan were supporting the regime which was out to destroy democracy, freedom of the people and regional peace. In the President's friendly pronouncements, there were no references to the man-made tragedy of the vast proportions which was taking place as a result of the military suppression of the democratic urges of the people of East Bengal.

By the end of Mrs. Gandhi's visit all the press reports confirmed that the grimness of the situation on the subcontinent and India's deep concerns as a result of the nine million refugees and the tension on the borders were not fully appreciated by the U.S. Administration. Some superficial gestures were claimed to have been made, but there was no real desire to use America's high prestige and special relationship to firmly dissuade President Yahya Khan from the pursuit of his ruthless policies of devastating East Bengal and perpetrating butcheries of the people there which were somewhat reminiscent of Hitler's madness. The overriding consideration with the Administration appeared to have been to save the prestige of Yahya Khan for which the reason given, as we learnt later, seemed hardly acceptable in that macabre situation. President Yahya Khan had, it was well known, played an important role as a courier between the U.S. President and the leaders of PRC to facilitate contacts between Peking and Washington.

Finally, as Mrs. Gandhi left New York, both sides knew that there was no mutual understanding between them nor was there any sympathy for India's point of view. Of course, there was no question of any joint communique, but the President and his advisers did not even make a public statement to share their assessment of the situation with the American nation or about the results of the discussions with the Indian Prime Minister. The total impression was that the President and his advisers were not prepared to play a role worthy of that great nation in a situation which called for the American leaders rising up to

the highest traditions of America's support for "morality, humanity and peace." This complete lack of understanding from the U.S. President was, perhaps, well expressed by Mrs. Gandhi in her speech at the return banquet for President Nixon when she said that she painfully realized that "Every nation had its own cross to bear."

There was a widespread expression of horror by the Congressmen, the intellectuals and the journalists at the brutalities to which the people of East Pakistan had been subjected and they were highly critical of the Administration's attitude. Some 350 leading academics, including five Nobel Prize winners, signed an appeal to the President to stop military and economic aid to Pakistan until a peaceful settlement with the Awami League had been arrived at. The *Christian Science Monitor* of November 24, 1971 commented thus on the situation in East Bengal:

> The generals in Islamabad made a fatal mistake last March when they attempted to recement their country by armed force. They alienated the people of East Pakistan—fatally. The most anyone can hope for now will be that President Yahya Khan will come to an agreement with the East Pakistan leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman under which East Pakistan will be in truth autonomous in a nominal Pakistan federation. . . .
>
> The Pakistan generals have paid a high price for their folly. In seven months of fighting and repression they have soaked East Pakistan in the blood of civil war and only increased the determination of the people of that province to manage their own affairs.

Visit to Paris and Bonn

Mrs. Gandhi arrived in Paris from New York. The exchange of views with the French Premier Chaban-Delmas, and the French President, Georges Pompidou, led to their complete agreement that an urgent political solution in East Bengal was the crying need of the moment. The origin of the crisis, as Pompidou put it, was political and the solution must be a political one in accordance with the wishes of the population concerned. This identity of views with the French leaders was closest to India as compared to any other Government. The French Government had already announced suspension of aid to Pakistan and it made it clear during the visit that all arms supplies even of old contracts would cease whether from Government or commercial sources until the normalization of the situation in East Pakistan.

During the exchanges, the French Premier had conveyed to Mrs. Gandhi the assessment of the French Government in regard to the

possible Chinese intervention to support Pakistan in the prevailing conflict. The French view was that the Government of China would be most hesitant to meddle in the present Indo-Pakistan tension. It was their impression that China, on the other hand, would be advising restraint on the part of Pakistan. This was an interesting viewpoint at this juncture as Bhutto was actually visiting Peking during those days. It was also generally believed that as China was going to enter the UNO after having waited for more than twenty years, she would be most anxious not to tarnish her image in the UN by lending support to the Pakistani military regime's brutal repression of the people of East Bengal.

As Mrs. Gandhi arrived in Bonn on November 10, I looked upon the visit with some enthusiasm. My reason was that the critical situation on the subcontinent needed to be explained by India to Chancellor Willy Brandt—a man of peace, who had been recently awarded the Nobel Peace prize—and his colleagues at the highest level. I had also in mind that the Indian Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, while visiting several European capitals in June that year, had not been able to visit Bonn.

A few weeks earlier, Jayaprakash Narayan had visited Bonn and had useful discussions with the Socialist leaders in Bonn and other European capitals. Since he was staying with me, I had good opportunity to know of the exchanges of views he had had with the various leaders of Europe. One could not but admire this initiative by a non-official personality of his international prestige undertaking this personal mission to explain the background of the civil war in East Pakistan, the military brutalities and the influx of refugees and to secure better understanding of the Socialist leaders of Europe for urgent international pressure to restore peace.

There were other reasons why I felt that Mrs. Gandhi's view would be warmly welcomed by the West German leaders. I particularly recalled, being then a diplomatic liaison officer in Bonn, how in April 1951, as a result of a confidential undertaking between Prime Minister Nehru and Dr. Konrad Adenauer, India was the first country to establish diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany after the Second World War. This was done within half an hour of the signing of the agreement between the German Chancellor and the three Allied High Commissioners authorizing the Federal Republic of Germany to establish diplomatic missions abroad after six years of military occupation.

We in Bonn were deeply moved by this extraordinary gesture of Jawaharlal Nehru, as this was his way of showing goodwill and

respect for a great nation which had passed through tragic times. The German leaders had always remembered this act of friendliness on the part of India.

Somewhat to my surprise, this event was graciously referred to by President Heineman when I presented my credentials to him as Ambassador in 1970. After the formal ceremonies, he invited me to sit down for an informal talk along with three representatives of the Foreign Office and three of my senior diplomatic colleagues. He placed his hand on my shoulder and said: "Mr. Ambassador, you are the godfather of this Embassy. It was started by you in 1951. We in Germany always remember with gratitude the suggestion of Prime Minister Nehru for India to be the first country to establish diplomatic relations with our country after the tragic war and the defeat we had suffered." I thanked the President for his remarks and assured him that Nehru and the whole Indian nation entertained a strong feeling of friendship and respect for the German nation which continued all the time. I referred briefly to the unique contribution of the German Indologists over the centuries to bring India closer to Germany and, indeed, to Europe. Heineman then said: "We also remember that even before Germany could establish diplomatic relations, India was the first country to send her Foreign Minister to visit West Germany to meet the then Chancellor Adenauer and the President Theodore Heuss." I could not recall the visit to which President Heineman was referring but again politely referred to the esteem which our leaders and the people had for the German nation.

Returning to the Embassy, I asked my colleagues to trace what could have been the occasion for President Heineman's reference to the Indian Foreign Minister's visit. Nehru, the Prime Minister, was himself the Foreign Minister and he certainly had not visited West Germany during those years. Going through the papers, I personally recalled that we had had the visit of Dr. Keskar, who was then Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. He had, under Prime Minister Nehru's instructions, visited West Germany in 1950 and we had arranged for his informal calls on the Chancellor and the President in accordance with Prime Minister Nehru's wishes.

In other respects, too, Indo-German relations were cordial and there was growing activity in commercial exchanges and industrial collaboration. In addition, India was receiving generous economic aid from the German Government. One political aspect on which the German Government was particularly sensitive related to our decision to recognize the German Democratic Republic and to send an Ambassador to East Berlin. Happily, during my discussions with a

high personality close to Chancellor Willy Brandt, a mutually acceptable confidential arrangement had been arrived at which was approved by both the Governments.

Chancellor Brandt and other senior leaders accorded a warm welcome to the Indian Prime Minister and had extensive discussions with her on the situation in East Bengal. Initially, Chancellor Brandt's attitude was like that of other Western Governments, to treat the situation as an internal affair of Pakistan which needed to be resolved by that Government. This, he hoped, would facilitate the return of refugees to their homes. He also suggested that, perhaps, a dialogue by India with the Pakistan Government could help in resolving the crisis. Mrs. Gandhi explained that she could under no circumstances think of India engaging in discussions with President Yahya Khan on this issue. It was Pakistan's internal crisis for which Yahya Khan himself was responsible. It was for him to atone for all this by meeting elected leaders and to find a political solution in accordance with their wishes. After listening to Mrs. Gandhi, Chancellor Brandt expressed great concern about the imminent danger of a serious conflict and expressed his earnest hope that such a tragedy would be averted.

After further exchanges, the West German leaders showed a much better understanding of the real issues at stake, viz., the army repression in East Bengal, the raging civil war there with the army chasing the guerrillas along India's frontiers, the nine million refugees in camps in India all along the East Bengal border and the growing danger of skirmishes between the Indian and Pakistan armies. Chancellor Brandt was, as he later told the press, deeply moved to learn of the gravity of the situation as explained by Mrs. Gandhi, and appreciated India's concerns about the looming calamity. He announced that he felt it desirable to urge upon President Yahya Khan to release Sheikh Mujib and have discussions with him to bring about a peaceful solution. Later in a press statement, the West German Government expressed its deep concern over the developments in the Indian subcontinent and expressed the hope that a military confrontation would be avoided. It also offered its full support to any efforts that were undertaken to find a political solution and restore peace in the region. It expressed its conviction that it was vital to start a political dialogue urgently to bring about peace in East Pakistan which alone could stop the present civil war and the army repression thus enabling the refugees to return to their homes.

The Federal Government's appreciation of Mrs. Gandhi's visit and its expression of goodwill for India was also demonstrated during the discussions relating to bilateral trade and economic aid. The Federal

Government offered to soften the terms of economic assistance and to adopt suitable measures to reduce India's trade deficit with West Germany. Chancellor Brandt also expressed his support for India's efforts to have bilateral agreements with the EEC countries for trade and setting up of joint ventures. The German Government availed of this occasion to announce that it would contribute a sum of Rs. 120 million for the refugee relief fund.

Though quite unrelated to the Indo-German talks during Mrs. Gandhi's visit, something was done by the ladies of the Indian Embassy on this occasion which impressed me greatly and was admired by Mrs. Gandhi and our German friends. While planning for Mrs. Gandhi's return banquet for Chancellor Brandt and his Cabinet Ministers and other leading official and non-official personalities, I invited the wives of the senior officers to join us in the discussions. We had agreed that the return banquet would be given at the Hostel Steigen Berger in Bonn and, after preliminary discussions, we suggested to the ladies to visit the hotel along with one or two officers, see the reception rooms at the Banquet Hall and have a talk with the hotel management. The next day my wife, Counselor Hashmi's wife, Zarina, and Manorama, wife of Hardev Bhalla, with two other ladies came to the Embassy with their views. They suggested that, so far as the furnishing and decor for the reception rooms and the Banquet Hall was concerned, the responsibility should be left entirely to them trusting their taste and their choice. We agreed and the Embassy ladies spent nearly a week visiting the Indian stores in Hamburg and Frankfurt to get typical pieces of Indian furniture, carpets, draperies, handicrafts and objects d'art. On the evening of the banquet, the reception rooms were decorated with entirely Indian furniture, mostly Rajasthani and South Indian including ivory inlaid tables with beautiful handicrafts of silver, copper and ivory on the tables. Entering those reception rooms was like entering some rooms in a Maharaja's palace. The decor in the Banquet Hall was even more impressive as colourful curtains of beautiful Indian drapery hung all along the walls and the dining tables were covered with beautiful embroidered table cloths. There were, of course, Indian carpets in both the reception rooms and the Banquet Hall. What surprised us even more was the design of the menu card proposed by the group. They got about 100 different beautiful large-sized prints of Moghul and Rajput miniatures which were fixed on the front page of the menu card and in between were the details of the menu in English and German languages. They had seen to it that no guests sitting next to each other had the same miniature painting on their cards.

With moving admiration, I realized how much the ladies can do to enhance the prestige of a Mission provided they are encouraged to participate freely and allowed to take decisions. I must confess that Zarina, who had worked the hardest, was rather hurt when one of the senior officials accompanying the Prime Minister rather sneeringly said, "You have probably borrowed the menu cards from Air India."

The banquet was a real success and apart from Chancellor Brandt, his two predecessors, Chancellor Erhard and Chancellor Kissinger, were also present. The speeches reflected the warm friendship and close understanding between FRG and India. Mrs. Gandhi greatly appreciated all the arrangements made by the ladies of the Embassy and wrote a special letter of thanks to them on her return to New Delhi. The then Cabinet Secretary, Swaminathan, told me on my next visit to New Delhi that the Prime Minister had specially referred to the Embassy banquet arrangements, during a Cabinet meeting.

Assessment of Mrs. Gandhi's Visit

Belying my original reservations, the Prime Minister's visit to the Western capitals achieved some positive results. She was able to make the world leaders understand the Bangladesh problem in proper perspective, disabusing some of those who had entertained the notion that the civil war in East Bengal was only a new facet of Indo-Pakistan confrontation while shutting their eyes to the genesis of the crisis. The Western leaders generally, and above all, the liberals, the intellectuals and the general public was able to appreciate the depth of India's feeling on this issue and realized why India considered it highly unjust for the world community to equate India with Pakistan in the crisis, for which the Pakistan President was solely responsible. She was also able to appeal forthrightly to them to exert their influence to bring about a political settlement restoring peaceful conditions, thus ensuring the safe return of the nine million refugees to their homes. Unless that happened, India, she had no hesitation in warning, would be compelled to take action in her own national interest.

Although most of the Western Governments were generally shocked at the events in East Pakistan, they could not have been expected to put strong pressure on President Yahya Khan as that would have been tantamount to interference in the internal affairs of another sovereign State. Whatever official advice these Governments may have given to the Pakistan President, the predominant consideration in their minds would have been their economic, political and strategic interests in Pakistan. It would have been expecting too much for any foreign

Government to take a strong stand with President Yahya Khan which could have seriously jeopardized their relations with Pakistan.

Despite the depth of Indian feelings, due to the gravity of the situation on her frontiers, most of the leaders still hoped that Pakistan's integrity would be preserved even in the form of some loose confederation. They could appreciate neither the strength of the Bangladesh people's legitimate aspirations for self-determination and independence, nor the boiling rage in every East Bengali heart at the barbarities perpetrated against them by the Pakistan army. They could not see the writing on the wall that Pakistan's disintegration was a fait accompli.

In America, the public opinion appreciated and shared India's concerns. President Nixon, however, seemed determined to support President Yahya Khan and his policies while vaguely hinting at using some persuasion.

As the Prime Minister left Bonn, I was convinced that all my misgivings had proved wrong, and I was happy that she had displayed her characteristic courage in leaving India to go abroad to call on the six Heads of Government in Europe and America when the situation in India was on the point of explosion. She was able to remove any ignorance of the real facts about the grave crisis and forewarned them of the possibility of a conflagration unless the great leaders showed their willingness and courage to persuade Yahya Khan to initiate some steps for a political solution.

Throughout the past three months one had been receiving regular reports from India that Mrs. Gandhi's superb and wise leadership had evoked great admiration among all sections of the people. Her decision to resist all pressure for the hasty recognition of Bangladesh had by now won the respect of even the opposition parties.

Mrs. Gandhi's clear grasp of the moral issues involved and her calm courage throughout the grave crisis and especially in the months of October and November showed high qualities of leadership that are rarely found.

Outbreak of War between India and Pakistan: November 1971

By the time Prime Minister Gandhi returned from her tour of the Western countries, if not even earlier, the Government of India had come to the conclusion that it was left with no choice but to intervene in the East Bengal crisis because of the mounting tensions on her border and the intolerable economic, political and social conditions created by

the vast flood of refugees who still continued to pour into India. Even then she preferred to wait for some time in the hope that some pressure from the world leaders might still help in President Yahya Khan initiating a dialogue with the East Pakistan leaders and offering a political solution acceptable to them. Speaking in Parliament on November 15, she admitted that the burden "had to be borne by us and the people of Bangladesh who have our sympathy and support" and that "we cannot depend on the international community or even the countries which I visited to solve our problems for us."

On the Eastern frontier, the situation was fast deteriorating to the point of no return. The Mukti Bahini, by now nearly 100,000 strong, was on the offensive and had liberated a number of enclaves deep inside the East Bengal territory. To retaliate against the Mukti Bahini camps all along the Indian frontier, the Pakistan army had also concentrated it forces opposite to these camps close to the Indian border, thus facing the Indian army positions. This resulted in frequent clashes and incursions into each other's territory. In addition, there were constant acts of sabotage both in Bangladesh and the Indian territory and shelling across the border between the two armies. About this time came the news of the shelling of the Indian border village of Kamalpur and a counter attack by the Mukti Bahini and the Indian army followed by several other major clashes in this area.

The continued guerrilla attacks and cross-firing between Indian and Pakistani forces had convinced the Pakistan President that a virtual state of war existed which led to his declaring national emergency on November 23. India also put her army on alert which was a signal to be ready for action. From then started an all-out offensive by the guerrillas and regular battles between the Indian and the Pakistani forces. As a result, from November 26 onwards an all-out war had started in Bangladesh.

Following the outbreak of war, the debates, the resolutions and the voting in the United Nations brought out clearly the attitude of the three great powers, the United States, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, towards India and Pakistan. The main objective of the resolutions was to achieve a cease-fire and withdrawal of forces. India, in reply, had made it clear that the condition precedent for her withdrawal of forces from East Bengal must be the complete evacuation of the Pakistan army from that region. That alone, India maintained, would stop the genocide by the Pakistani forces and would permit the people of Bangladesh to achieve their national demand to establish their own national Government. Only the departure of the Pakistan army and the formation of a national Government by Bangladesh could pave the

way for the safe return of the refugees. The United States in the Security Council moved a resolution calling for immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of troops by both parties. The Soviet Union, supporting India's point of view, vetoed the resolution and insisted that the bloodshed in East Bengal could only cease if a political settlement was arrived at there. The Soviet representative also took the opportunity to warn all other powers to keep out of the conflict. China supported the US resolution and criticized India for her aggression against the Pakistan Government supported by the socialist imperialism of the Soviet Union.

The Chinese representative announced his country's full support to the Pakistan Government and its people in their "just" struggle, though it was difficult to understand what "just" struggle the Chinese representative was referring to, when in actual fact, the "just" struggle was that of the people of East Bengal against the military occupation and brutalities of the Pakistan regime. During these discussions, the question arose whether the representative of Bangladesh should be invited to the Security Council Session. While the Soviet representative supported this, the Chinese representative strongly opposed it.

India was accused by the Pakistani representative of launching aggression in dismembering Pakistan. The Indian representative pointed out that it was the Pakistan President who must accept the full responsibility for the disintegration of Pakistan. The question then came up before the General Assembly on December 7 when it passed a resolution calling for immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of troops by both parties to their own side of the border. India maintained her previous position that she could not accept the resolution unless the Bangladesh Government was willing to accept it. In a later Security Council meeting, the USA again denounced India for her defiance of the General Assembly resolution. The Indian Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, made it clear that the views of the Bangladesh Government must be ascertained as the war was taking place on the Bangladesh soil. He added that for the Bangladesh Government the withdrawal of the Pakistani forces from its soil, and the acknowledgement of its independence were the fundamental conditions for a cease-fire. The Indian position was that her forces having gone on the request of the Bangladesh authorities would withdraw immediately on a request from the Bangladesh Government. From the Indian point of view, it seemed quite incomprehensible that, even at this stage after the massacre of more than a million Bangladeshis by the genocidal Pakistan army, the United States had no sympathy for the national aspiration of the 75 million people of Bangladesh or to consider a

dialogue with their duly elected leaders—elected as a result of the general elections held by President Yahya. These leaders were being incarcerated as if they were criminals.

What came as a bolt from the blue was the news on December 3 that the Pakistan Air Force had simultaneously bombed a number of Indian airfields on India's Western frontier, namely in Ambala, Amritsar, Agra, Jodhpur, Pathankot and Srinagar. Apparently, the Pakistani objective was to destroy a large number of Indian aircraft by a single well-planned surprise attack. Unfortunately for Pakistan, the damage done was minimal but this led to the start of war on the Western frontier also. Immediately preceding this, there was bombing by Pakistani planes in Agartala and shelling across the Eastern frontier also. In India, a state of emergency was declared on December 3 and the Prime Minister in her address to the nation said: "Today, the war on Bangladesh has become the war on India and the Pakistani attack has to be finally repulsed." Next day Parliament fully supported the Government's decision to pursue the war on both the fronts.

What could have led President Yahya Khan to make the crazy decision to bomb Indian airfields on India's Western front and to widen the conflict? Some thought it was with a view to get UN intervention on the ground that the war was now between India and Pakistan and not, as it was argued previously, a domestic conflict in East Pakistan. The other reason could have been Pakistan's hope that pressure on India on her Western front would ease the pressure on Pakistan in her Eastern wing. Thus, we had from December 3 onwards conflict raging between India and Pakistan on both the fronts.

At this stage, the question of the recognition of the Bangladesh Government became more relevant and even imminent. Whatever President Yahya's reason, he had deliberately launched the war against India. The very next day, i.e., on December 4, Tajuddin Ahmed, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh again requested the Indian Prime Minister for the recognition of the Government of Bangladesh. This time, the Indian Prime Minister accepted the suggestion of the Bangladesh Government and accorded diplomatic recognition to it. Her statement in the Lok Sabha gave the reasons for this decision. Mrs. Gandhi said that two developments had a determining influence on India's decision; one, the phenomenal victory of the Awami League in the elections held on December 7, 1970 and, two, the valiant struggle of the Bangladesh people in the face of tremendous odds. Despite these facts and also even after the influx of more than ten million refugees in the Indian territory, the Indian Government did not act precipitately in the matter of recognition but waited and watched the developments in

world politics. When it became clear that the liberation movement had become thoroughly national and no power could, by crushing it, restore the control of West Pakistan over Bangladesh, India lost no time in according her recognition. Mrs. Gandhi said in her statement in Parliament that "With the unanimous revolt of the entire people of Bangladesh and the success of their struggle, it has become increasingly apparent that the so-called mother-State of Pakistan was totally incapable of bringing the people of Bangladesh back under its control."

Thus, on December 6 India recognized the Government of Bangladesh. While the Pakistan army in East Pakistan was getting highly demoralized and was fast withdrawing towards Dacca, President Yahya's main aim was to capture more vital areas in the Western sector.

In East Bengal, there were fourteen days of severe fighting between the Pakistani forces on one side and the Mukti Bahini and the Indian army on the other. The Pakistan army suffered severe reverses as it had also to cope with the vast and embittered population of East Bengal and ultimately it was left with no choice but to seek cease-fire.

General Niazi's request to the Indian Commanding Officer on December 16 for a cease-fire was acceded to and the instrument of surrender was signed by him and General J.S. Aurora at the Dacca Ramna Race Course. Bangladesh, thus, became an independent sovereign State. The surrender of some 92,000 Pakistani troops in East Bengal posed a serious problem of their security as the whole population of Bangladesh was seething with hatred and bitterness against them. It was finally decided, with the approval of the Bangladesh Government, to get all these approximately 92,000 prisoners of war into India where their security could be assured and they could be given all facilities and consideration in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Another portentous U.S. move during the second week of December deserves special mention. While furious battles were raging between the Indian and the Pakistan armies in East Bengal, there came an announcement on December 10 from Washington that the U.S. Seventh Fleet headed by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *Enterprise* had left for Singapore. Later reports from Saigon and Washington on December 13 indicated that a task force consisting of the *Enterprise*, an amphibious assault ship, a guided missile frigate, four guided missile destroyers and a landing craft, passed secretly through the Straits of Malacca in two groups on December 13-14, and entered the Bay of Bengal on December 15. India's Ambassador, Jha, could not get any

clarification in Washington but the U.S. Defence Secretary stated on December 14 that the movement of the task force was for certain contingency plans for the evacuation of American citizens from East Pakistan. It was pointed out to Washington that 114 U.S. citizens had already been evacuated from Dacca on December 12 and that the remaining 47 had remained there of their own free will. This move, in the Indian view, was obviously meant to convey an unambiguous warning to India at the height of war in Bangladesh. This provided the opportunity to the Soviet Government to denounce the U.S. Seventh Fleet movement as gross blackmail and pressure against India. To the Indian people, it proved once again the strongly anti-Indian attitude of the then American Administration which was also confirmed later through the Anderson Papers relating to the secret WSAG meeting of December 3. There, Henry Kissinger was reported to have said: "I am getting hell every half an hour from the President that we are not being tough enough on India—he wants to tilt in favour of Pakistan." We had also seen how military equipment had been sent to Pakistan secretly by the U.S. in spite of the Administration's assurances given to the Congress. Senator Edward Kennedy had criticized the supplies saying, "Nothing has come to symbolize the intransigence of American policy more than the question of military shipments to Pakistan." What fateful steps the Seventh Fleet might have taken, if the war had continued any longer in East Pakistan, is a matter for conjecture. As it happened, the Pakistani troops were unable to face the onslaught of the Mukti Bahini and the Indian forces and accepted the cease-fire and surrendered.

In this connection, pointed attention may be drawn to the fact that repeatedly the U.S. President and his advisers had also charged India of having designs to disintegrate West Pakistan. This was being said in spite of the firm assurances by the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister of India and also in the speeches of the Indian Foreign Minister in the Security Council to the effect that India did not have any territorial designs on West Pakistan.

Cessation of Hostilities

On December 16, Mrs. Gandhi announced that, since the Pakistan armed forces had surrendered in Dacca and Bangladesh was now free, India had ordered her forces to observe cease-fire on the Western front from 8 p.m. on December 17. This offer of an Indian cease-fire was accepted by General Yahya Khan and the war on the Western front also stopped.

What were the consequences of the two weeks-long war between India and Pakistan on the Western front? Like the conflict in 1965, as described in an earlier chapter, Pakistani forces launched a thrust in the Chhamb sector with a view to gain control of the strategic positions in the state of Kashmir. Although their main attacks were repulsed, they occupied a small area in the Chhamb sector. India was, on the other hand, able to capture some commanding heights in Uri, Akhnoor, Kargil, and Tithwal sectors. The Haji Pir pass and Kargil, two vital high points, which India had to surrender to Pakistan as a result of the Tashkent Declaration, were wrested back.

The position after the cease-fire was that Pakistan captured about 50 square miles of Indian territory in the Chhamb sector in Kashmir and two small areas in the Hussainiwala and Fazilka sectors. The Indian Army seized nearly 50 Pakistani posts and several other small areas in the North and West of the cease-fire line in Kashmir, about 400 square miles in the Shakargarh salient, the Khemkaran salient and several border posts on the Punjab frontier, and about 1,000 square miles in the Sindh and Kutch deserts.

With the surrender of the Pakistani forces in East Bengal and the acceptance of cease-fire by President Yahya Khan in the West, he forfeited all legitimacy as President of Pakistan. The military humiliation and the disintegration of Pakistan, a result of his policies, had aroused strong popular revulsion against him. Bhutto was invited to assume the national responsibilities and he became the President and the Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan on December 20, 1971.

Bhutto lost no time in releasing Sheikh Mujib from his jail where he had been kept for the past nine months and got him to Rawalpindi. Bhutto had discussions with him on December 27 while keeping him under house detention at an undisclosed place. It appeared that Bhutto's offer to Sheikh Mujib was to maintain some links between Bangladesh and Pakistan even in the form of some loose confederation, but he failed to get any commitment from Sheikh Mujib. During this week, Bhutto also warned other countries against recognition of Bangladesh as an independent nation. Finally, Bhutto decided to free Sheikh Mujib and sent him to London by a special PIA plane and from there Sheikh Mujib proceeded to Dacca via New Delhi. In Dacca he received a tumultuous welcome from his people and reaffirmed the independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh snapping all links with Pakistan.

In a television interview in London shown on January 16, Sheikh Mujib had said that President Yahya Khan had proposed to Bhutto

before handing over power to him that he, Bhutto, should order the Sheikh's execution as he had been sentenced to death by hanging.

Bhutto had replied: "If I kill Mujib, not a single West Pakistani will ever come home." Mujib believed that it was Bhutto who had saved his life.

In spite of President Bhutto's warning, during the next six weeks some forty countries officially recognized Bangladesh. These included Great Britain, Canada, Austria, Scandinavian countries, Belgium, Netherlands, France, Italy, Japan, Nepal, Burma and Thailand. Bangladesh had, without doubt joined the international community of independent sovereign nations.

8

Simla Agreement and Further Developments in Indo-Pak Relations

The Simla Summit (June 27 to July 2, 1972)

The year-long civil war in Bangladesh in 1971 and finally Pakistan's war with India on her Western front in December led to disastrous consequences for Pakistan. The country got disintegrated with the declaration of independence by its Eastern wing, now Bangladesh, and more than 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war were detained in India for their own security—after an agreement between India and Bangladesh. There were also a vast number of Pakistanis in Bangladesh whose fate must have been of serious concern to Pakistan. No less agonizing were the consequences of the Indo-Pakistan war on the Western frontier. After the cease-fire on December 17, India was holding more than 5,000 square miles of Pakistani territory and the two armies were confronting each other despite the cease-fire. The Indian press reports alleged frequent violations of the cease-fire line by the the Pakistani side, which certainly pointed to the fragility of peace on the frontiers.

In this situation, there was need to establish some contacts and start a dialogue between the two Governments particularly with a view to reassure the Pakistani leaders of India's desire to settle the grim issues left over by the civil strife and the warfare and to strive for peace and reconciliation on the subcontinent. Quite appropriately and without the slightest delay, the initiative was taken by the Indian side.

We received the report in Bonn on December 22 of the Indian Foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Singh's offer to Pakistan at a press conference in New York. He said: "We are prepared to go to Islamabad and we will welcome them if they want to come to Delhi."

Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi, in her public statements during December and January expressed the willingness of her Government to hold bilateral talks with the Pakistani leaders to settle issues like the repatriation of the POWs, the vacation of the territories occupied during

the war and normalization and improvement of relations between the two countries. As a follow-up, India's formal offer to hold negotiations bilaterally with Pakistan was officially communicated on February 14, 1972, by India's Permanent Representative at the United Nations to the Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim.

The Indian offers specifically stated that India was ready for bilateral talks with Pakistan without any third-party mediation and without any preconditions with the aim of achieving durable peace in the subcontinent. After some initial delay, President Bhutto agreed to a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Gandhi, to be preceded by discussions between the emissaries of the two sides to prepare the agenda. After three days of meetings at Murree starting from April 26, 1972, the emissaries succeeded in formulating an agreed agenda for the Summit Meeting which took place in Simla on June 27.

While all reports referred to the warm welcome accorded to the Pakistan President and his delgation and to the cordiality of the atmosphere during the meetings, the discussions brought out sharp differences between the two delegations. The talks dragged on for five days and the press reports on the afternoon of July 2 indicated that the negotiations had broken down. But fortunately during President Bhutto's farewell meeting with Mrs. Gandhi that evening, a new ray of hope appeared. At the last moment, the leaders and their delegations agreed to resume the talks. Finally, late that night was signed the Simla Agreement which dealt with all aspects of the Indo-Pakistan relations with a hopeful vision of a happier future.

The Simla Agreement

The Simla Agreement was enthusiastically received in both countries. In it the two Governments not only agreed to resolve the problems left over by the war, such as the withdrawal of the troops and the vacation of the occupied territories but they also committed themselves to bring about a durable peace between the two countries which had eluded them for the past twenty-five years. While committing themselves to respect each other's national unity, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereign equality, the parties agreed that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they would refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other. An important provision in the agreement, which obviously had particular reference to Kashmir, laid down that the two countries were resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means

mutually agreed upon. Pending the final settlement of any problems between the two countries, neither side would unilaterally alter the situation and both would prevent the organization, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations. A prerequisite for reconciliation and good-neighbourliness was the commitment by both countries to peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's territory, integrity and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. The promise of the future active cooperation between the two countries was embodied in the provisions to resume all communications, postal, telegraphic, air links, etc., and to promote bilateral relations in commercial, economic, cultural, educational and scientific fields.

Over the years I had personally witnessed the relentless official barriers created to prevent free contacts and communications between the two peoples, who sincerely longed to be close and friendly. I was, therefore, happy to read the provisions about the resumption of communications, and promotion of travel facilities for the nationals of the two countries.

Finally the agreement laid down that the two Heads would meet again at a mutually convenient time in the future and that, in the meanwhile, the representatives of the two sides would meet to discuss further the modalities and arrangements for the establishment of durable peace and normalization of relations including the question of repatriation of prisoners of war and civilian internees, a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir and the resumption of diplomatic relations.

It thus appeared that a quarter century of enmity was being buried between the two countries on account of the statesmanship of their leaders. Mrs. Gandhi had taken the initiative at the earliest and her sincerity, frankness and sensitivity to Pakistan's mortifying situation had created the proper climate for mutual trust. One could not have remarked the slightest suggestion on the part of India to impose terms on Pakistan from the position of strength.

Bhutto, the democratically elected leader of his people, was faced with the horrendous situation—all as a result of the stupidities and madness of the generals. The army had suffered severe defeat on both the fronts, the country had disintegrated, with one part declaring independence, and the nation had been left humiliated, and stupefied. India was occupying 5,000 square miles of Pakistani territory and there were more than 90,000 prisoners of war in the Indian camps and nearly 200,000 Pakistani nationals in the surcharged atmosphere of Bangladesh.

In these overwhelming circumstances, Bhutto acted with remarkable realism, courage and dignity to establish friendship and cooperation with India to which he had been so opposed during my experiences of 1965-66. I say he displayed courage as he had to be acutely mindful of his accountability to his people which the military dictators had been able to flout with disdain and arrogance in the preceding two decades. Bhutto with his democratic commitment had to carry with him his people who were in a trauma.

Even at the risk of repetition, I would say that to me three provisions of the agreement held out the best promise of the dawn of a new era in the subcontinent. The first was the commitment by the two Governments to end the state of confrontation and to renounce the threat or use of force in the settlement of their disputes and differences. It was for the first time that such a solemn and mandatory agreement had been reached between the two countries. Both sides pledged to settle their differences "through bilateral negotiations or by other peaceful means mutually agreed upon." The second was the promotion of commercial, cultural, scientific and educational exchanges as well as the encouragement of travel between India and Pakistan, thus removing the existing barriers. If implemented, such exchanges would forge strong links between the people of the two countries at various levels. And third was the commitment by the two Governments to put an end to the adverse propaganda against each other which always generated suspicion, distrust and hatred between the two peoples otherwise longing to be friends. In addition, the two Governments agreed to promote the dissemination of such information as would build up mutual understanding and friendship.

The two leaders, as widely appreciated, had thus stirred the hopes of the 700 million people of the subcontinent. Having personally watched how high expectations raised on several occasions in the past had been betrayed, my enthusiasm at the Simla Agreement was tempered by some anxieties.

Simla Agreement and the Tashkent Declaration Compared

Having been present at the signing of the Tashkent Declaration in 1966, I could not help comparing the Simla Agreement with it and the circumstances in which they were signed. More so, as several passages in the latter were an echo of the former. Both Summit Meetings were held after a war between the two countries, in both cases, Pakistan had suffered serious reverses and, in 1971, a severe defeat. The major issues were the return of the prisoners of war, the vacation of occupied

territories and the restoration of peaceful conditions and normal relations.

In both cases, the joint pledge was to vacate the territories occupied during the war and to restore normal and peaceful relations and to promote understanding and friendly relations between the two peoples. Similarly, in each agreement, the parties reaffirmed their allegiance to the UN Charter and committed themselves to settle any differences or disputes between them by peaceful means abjuring resort to force. Both agreements raised high hopes of cooperation in economic and commercial relations and promotion of cultural exchanges.

There were a couple of striking differences in the two agreements which were, in fact, reassuring. Foremost was that the Tashkent Declaration was signed by the military dictator, President Ayub Khan, in the face of the total opposition of Bhutto, then Foreign Minister. In Simla, it was Bhutto, President of Pakistan and the democratically elected leader of the nation with his party commanding a big majority in the National Assembly, who committed himself firmly to all the above provisions of the agreement. To ensure democratic consensus, he brought in his delegation to Simla some prominent members of the opposition party NAP.

Even the attitude of the people of Pakistan was very different in the two cases. In the case of the 1965 war, the people of West Pakistan were constantly fed on the propaganda that Pakistan had bravely gone out to liberate Kashmir and had almost succeeded. The people expected these brave hopes held out to them to be translated in the Tashkent Declaration. On the other hand, they found that their leaders had throughout deceived them and that Pakistan had actually been defeated in that venture. Consequently, they had expressed their resentment against President Ayub and against the Tashkent Declaration by demonstrations all over West Pakistan in January 1966.

In the case of the Simla Agreement, the people of Pakistan were under shock at the ignominious consequences of the reckless policies pursued by their military dictators, President Ayub and later President Yahya Khan. They earnestly wanted detente and peace with India. They had also confidence in their new President who was their democratically elected leader.

Another provision which was conspicuously and meaningfully different related to the withdrawal of the troops from the areas occupied in each other's territory in Kashmir. In the Tashkent Declaration, status quo ante had to be restored and the troops of both sides had to be withdrawn on each side of the cease-fire line to positions as on August 5, 1965. As against that, at the Simla Summit "the line of actual

control" was agreed to as the boundary which the two forces had to respect. Quite obviously, the two Governments had accepted that the cease-fire line with its supervision by the UN observers had ceased to be relevant after twenty years. It was the line of actual control which would henceforth form the frontier or the international boundary between the two countries. There must have been some serious discussions that, if the vision of a "durable peace" had to be realized, the basic question of Kashmir which had been constantly raked up in the past to generate hatred and conflict must be resolved once and for all and that both sides should finally accept the status quo along the line of actual control. The discussions relating to Kashmir in both the Summit Meetings merit special examination.

The Kashmir Issue

On both occasions, the future status of Kashmir had become a subject of serious controversy and discord between the two delegations. At Tashkent there was a complete breakdown of the negotiations after three days of discussions between the two Heads of Government and their delegations. The Pakistani side insisted that the question of the future of the Kashmir state must be reopened and some self-executing machinery devised to determine that. The Indian position was that the final status of the Kashmir state as an integral part of the Indian Union had been settled nine years earlier by a duly elected Kashmir Constituent Assembly and India could not agree to any discussion on what was Indian territory.

With this deadlock, the two delegations had made plans for their departure when the situation was saved by two days of Soviet diplomatic efforts with the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India. The maximum concession that India finally made was to agree to the formulation that the subject of "Jammu and Kashmir was discussed, and each of the sides set forth its respective position." India had stuck firmly to the position that Kashmir was an integral part of India and no outside power had any locus standi to question it. For the Pakistan President, this one-line statement in the Tashkent Declaration provided a face-saving device although Bhutto remained opposed to the agreement.

In Simla again, according to the press reports from New Delhi, the negotiations broke down on the discussions relating to Kashmir. Unlike at Tashkent, it was India and not Pakistan which raised the Kashmir question. If the promise of a "durable peace" had to be realized, the Indian side must have felt that one of the basic issues and

causes of conflict, that is the differences over Kashmir between the two Governments, had to be finally resolved. President Bhutto was no doubt sincere about "durable peace" with India, but so long as no final commitments were made between the two Governments in regard to the status of Kashmir, some fanatical elements and warmongers in the opposition in Pakistan would always raise the slogan of the liberation of Kashmir to embitter relations between the two countries and to harass their own Government. The concept of "a cease-fire line" after several decades also militated against the promise of a "durable peace," as the term itself implied an interregnum in an otherwise state of hostility. Again, would not respect for each other's territorial integrity require respect for the boundary between the two parts of Kashmir in India and Pakistan?

With these considerations, it would have been understandable for the Indian side to suggest some final agreement on Kashmir. This could, perhaps, have been in the form of a commitment by both Governments to the sovereign authority of each other over their respective parts of the Kashmir state. Logic would have also supported this as not only the Indian part of Kashmir had constitutionally merged with India but Pakistan-occupied Kashmir had also been formally integrated into Pakistan.

As a corollary to this proposition, India must have insisted that in Kashmir, the line of actual control must be recognized as the new boundary rather than continuing the myth of cease-fire line.

From the meagre reports received in Bonn, I concluded that the negotiations must have broken down on this issue of Kashmir. Hence the decision of the Pakistan President and his delegation to leave Simla on July 2 and his farewell call on the Indian Prime Minister that evening.

Quite objectively, while fervently hoping for some final agreement on Kashmir, I could not imagine how President Bhutto could have agreed to such a proposition in the prevailing situation in Pakistan. A traumatized nation, seething with indignation and bitterness, would have condemned any agreement on a final settlement of the Kashmir question by President Bhutto as signing a "treaty of surrender" by him.

Although Bhutto's party, the PPP, was democratically elected as a majority party during the fateful election of December 1971, there were half a dozen other parties which had won the remaining seats. Bhutto's credibility would have been irretrievably damaged in the emerging democratic atmosphere of Pakistan. In consequence, the militaristic elements would have reasserted themselves in the name of saving

Pakistani honour. All this could have explained the intractable nature of the negotiations on the Kashmir question.

The final agreement postponed the accord on Kashmir but formally accepted the "line of actual control" as the boundary between the two parts of Kashmir without the presence of outside observers. This seemed to imply a tacit acceptance of a possible future solution, along this line particularly as there was a pledge by both sides not to resort to force to change the "line of actual control." This was further reinforced by the commitment by the two Heads of Government to solve this issue by peaceful means and bilaterally without invoking anv outside mediation or intervention.

To me this decision demonstrated goodwill and realism on both sides. India, despite the leverage she had after Pakistan's defeat, did not exert undue pressure which would have poisoned the atmosphere so necessary for a future of goodwill and peace on the subcontinent and Pakistan displayed accommodation mindful of the realities of the situation.

Long-drawn-out Negotiations to Implement the Simla Agreement (1973-74)

Having returned to New Delhi in the first week of December 1972 as Foreign Secretary, I now had to give day-to-day attention to Indo-Pak relations. I found that it was a matter of profound concern to the Prime Minister that the spirit of the Simla Agreement was being eroded, its implementation bogged down amidst increasing adverse propaganda between the two sides. Apart from the withdrawal of troops which also was delayed till the end of December 1972 and the delineation of the line of actual control, little progress had been made, despite India's efforts to discuss "the modalities and arrangements for establishing a durable peace and normalization of relations."

Thus, the high hopes generated by the Simla Agreement were being belied. I recall Mrs. Gandhi sadly reflecting, during a conversation soon after I joined the Foreign Office, on the existing stalemate and how two solemn commitments made by Bhutto were not being honoured. She said that in Simla Bhutto had been frank enough to admit that it was he who had always believed in and striven for "confrontation" against India. He accepted that he had realized that that was a disastrous policy for both countries. Claiming to be convinced that in "cooperation rather than confrontation" with India lay the peace and prosperity of Pakistan and the subcontinent, he earnestly promised to pursue cooperation. As against that statement, she pointed out the

tone of belligerent pronouncements which Bhutto had started making within a year of the Simla Agreement. The other commitment of his related to the recognition of Bangladesh. Here again, Mrs. Gandhi felt, the promise had not been kept which was responsible for the present stalemate.

Soon after this talk with me, Mrs. Gandhi wrote to President Bhutto on January 24 suggesting that the officials of the two sides should meet at an early date to discuss plans for the resumption of communications by land, sea and air including overflights over each other's territory. This was in accordance with the third clause of the Simla Declaration listing measures to be adopted by the two countries in order to restore and normalize relations. In reply to Mrs. Gandhi's letter, Bhutto said that any steps towards normalization must wait till other questions, in particular, the return of POWs was settled. He referred to the sixth clause of the Simla Declaration which had laid down that the two sides would discuss the modalities for establishing "durable peace" including the question of repatriation of POWs and civilian internees.

Although we were disappointed with Bhutto's reply, to me his argument was quite understandable. As some 92,000 POWs were held up in Indian camps, how could he justify to his people and the Pakistan army that he was talking of normalization of relations with India and resumption of all manner of communications between the two countries?

All this time, Mrs. Gandhi was deeply distressed at the formidable humanitarian problems as hundreds of thousands of Pakistani and Bangladeshi citizens were stranded and detained against their will for nearly a year away from their homes. These included nearly 92,000 POWs in India, some 250,000 Pakistani nationals in Bangladesh and a similar number of Bangladeshis in Pakistan. How early could this agonizing problem of "human debris" created by the 1971 war and the emergence of Bangladesh be resolved by repatriating these vast numbers to their homes and their families? This required agreement between the Governments of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and, above all, between the latter two. Their nationals could not be repatriated till Pakistan and Bangladesh agreed to this in principle and accepted the modalities to implement the repatriation. Similarly, the release and transfer of the Pakistani POWs, despite Pakistan's protests and propaganda against India all over the world, could not be agreed to by India without the approval of the Bangladesh Government as the POWs had surrendered to the joint command of India and Bangladesh in the territory of Bangladesh and the latter was a co-detaining power.

They had been brought to India solely in the interest of their personal safety in view of the prevailing hatred against them in Bangladesh.

The real obstacle was that Pakistan and Bangladesh were not on speaking terms as Pakistan had not recognized Bangladesh and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had throughout maintained that he would talk to Pakistan only on the basis of "sovereign equality." In this situation and with an earnest effort to break the deadlock, the Government of India continued to explore possibilities with the Government of Bangladesh of some movement forward to deal with the humanitarian problems so that the POWs, and the Pakistani and the Bengali nationals could start moving to their homes from the places of their detention.

Talks with Sheikh Mujib and Other Leaders

Soon after the Bangladesh elections in March 1973, Mrs. Gandhi deputed P.N. Haksar as her special emissary and me as an official delegation to Dacca to explore the possibility of some new and bold initiative to resolve the deadlock between Bangladesh and Pakistan. We had two meetings with President Sheikh Mujib and four days' discussions with the Foreign Minister, Dr. Kamal Hussain, and other top leaders and officials. During the talks with the President, I was greatly moved by his anguished references to the massacre by the Pakistan army of two million Bengalis including especially en masse the intellectuals, journalists, University professors and students. His voice would choke when he spoke of genocide all over Bangladesh and other atrocities and crimes against humanity involving men, women and children. In these long discussions with Sheikh Mujib and Dr. Kamal Hussain, we found a genuine desire on their part to contribute to peace on the subcontinent and their courage to compromise Bangladesh's principled stand for this end left a deep impression on me. Our aim under Prime Minister Gandhi's instructions was to impress upon them the urgent need of the repatriation of the nearly 91,000 POWs as well as the immediate movement of nearly half a million Pakistanis and Bengalis detained against their will in the other country's territory. We suggested that to achieve that, the Bangladesh Government might consider agreeing to resolve this vast humanitarian problem even before Pakistani recognition of Bangladesh. Sheikh Mujib was strongly opposed to any negotiations between Bangladesh and Pakistan except on the basis of "sovereign equality." He was, however, big enough to consider authorizing India to negotiate on behalf of Bangladesh, and promised to send his Foreign Minister to New Delhi for further discussions.

Joint Declaration of April 18, 1973

A week later, on April 17, Dr. Kamal Hussain visited New Delhi to hold discussions with the Indian Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh. As a result of four long sessions of discussions during which Dr. Kamal Hussain was frequently in communication with President Mujib, the two Foreign Ministers signed a Joint Declaration on April 18. The Declaration listed three problems and decided that as a package the following actions should be taken simultaneously:

a) The Pakistani POWs numbering about 92,000 should be repatriated to Pakistan while keeping back 195 POWs against whom there were serious charges of war crimes. (Soon thereafter the Bangladesh Government publicly announced that these POWs would be tried for war crimes.)
b) The Bangladeshis in Pakistan, unofficially estimated at 300,000, should be repatriated to Bangladesh.
c) The Pakistanis in Bangladesh, about 260,000 and mostly Biharis, should be repatriated to Pakistan.
d) India was authorized to conduct negotiations on behalf of the Bangladesh Government.

While I greatly admired the concern and the sincere efforts of Mrs. Gandhi on this question, it was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's courageous response to the Indian Prime Minister's appeal that opened the way for a further dialogue with Pakistan. Having so far insisted that Bangladesh would not enter into any agreement with Pakistan till the latter recognized the "sovereign equality" of Bangladesh, Mujib gave us his assent that the question of recognition could be "kept aside" for the present and negotiations could be started to expedite the movement of more than half a million people of the three categories. This was a major concession which, I felt, should be welcomed by Pakistan even if they had some genuine difficulty in "recognizing" Bangladesh.

On the question of the trials for the "war crimes" also, Sheikh Mujib's attitude was not vindictive but to comply with the dictates of justice and to bring to book those who had committed most heinous crimes against humanity like massacre, torture, rape, etc. President Mujib had already informed us in Dacca that the number of war criminals had been reduced to 195 although previously the number under consideration was more than a thousand. He had now given his approval, that all the POWs with the exception of these 195 could be repatriated to Pakistan by India.

These exchanges between the Government of India and the Government of Bangladesh, as mentioned earlier, were formalized in the form of the Joint Declaration of April 18, 1973 which was communicated to the Pakistan Government.

Indian Delegation's Discussions in Rawalpindi, July 24-27

After some delay, and expressing its inability to send a delegation to New Delhi, the Pakistan Government invited an Indian delegation to discuss these proposals in Islamabad in the fourth week of July 1973. On the Indian side, the delegation was led by P.N. Haksar as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister and I do not think we could have had a more experienced, wise and persuasive leader. P.N. Dhar as the Prime Minister's Secretary and I as Foreign Secretary were other members of the delegation. The Pakistani delegation was led by Aziz Ahmad, Minister for Foreign Affairs, with Agha Shahi, Foreign Secretary, and two others as part of the delegation.

Long sessions of talks between the two delegations for three days—July 24-26—did not lead to any meeting of minds on the fundamental issues of repatriation, though the talks were frank, intensive and without rancour.

While initiating discussions, Aziz Ahmad repeatedly assured that Pakistan had full faith in the Simla Agreement as at Simla, India and Pakistan had two alternatives: one friction, tension and conflict and the other friendship, amity and cooperation. He praised the Indian Prime Minister's courage and farsightedness despite the opposition in India to arrive at an agreement for a durable peace between the two countries. Making a further complimentary reference to Mrs. Gandhi, he said that the Pakistani leaders had acknowledged with gratitude the Indian Prime Minister's assurance in Simla that "a strong and independent Pakistan was in India's best interest."

On recent trends, he cited instances of adverse propaganda in India casting aspersions on Pakistani bonafides regarding the implementation of the Simla Agreement, attributing hostility to Pakistan even in the wording of the Joint Declaration, and cited various examples of the "Urdu Tabasra" programme of All-India Radio. He also took exception to the alleged propaganda in India that Pakistan was not keen to have the POWs back as President Bhutto was afraid that their repatriation might create serious political troubles for him. Realizing that India had come prepared to protest strongly against the continuous anti-India propaganda by Pakistan Aziz Ahmad, on his own, admitted that there were some glaring examples of anti-Indian speeches and publications in

Pakistan. and that Pakistan was not above blame especially so far as Azad Kashmir Radio broadcasts were concerned. The detention of about 91,000 POWs was, he said, the main obstacle to the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan. Other matters, such as overflights between the two countries were peripheral and Pakistan could not discuss other issues unless the POWs were repatriated to Pakistan.

President Bhutto, Aziz Ahmad said, was committed to peaceful relations on the subcontinent and the sincerity of his assurances on this question should not be doubted. His party's slogan was: "Roti, Kapra aur Makan," i.e., every Pakistani must be provided with "Bread, Clothing and a House." The President was, therefore, deeply distressed by the huge defence expenditure which must be reduced to provide socio-economic welfare to the people. President Bhutto, we were told, would earnestly strive for peaceful relations with India.

While welcoming this assurance, the Indian delegation wanted to know how this could be reconciled with President Bhutto's recent belligerent speeches of a thousand years of war with India. Such speeches vehemently vowing confrontation and conflict with India had a damaging impact on the minds of the people on both sides. What we wanted to know, was the provocation for this slogan of 1,000 years confrontation with India, as such a speech had been made even while we were in Rawalpindi. Could the Pakistan officials show any pronouncements of Indian leaders referring to confrontation with Pakistan? Our shock was all the greater as in Simla, President Bhutto had assured Prime Minister Gandhi that confrontation was a thing of the past and he had, in fact, admitted that he was the author of confrontation and he wanted to bury it. This complete reversal of President Bhutto's attitude was, we made clear, causing us serious misgivings.

Aziz Ahmad seemed apologetic and said that his President had spoken of the confrontation in the past. It would not be so in the future. He suggested that we could take up this matter with him when we met him in the next two days.

Haksar opened his statement by stressing the imperative need for the solution of the humanitarian issues which involved the repatriation of some 500,000 people detained against their will in the three countries. Had Pakistan recognized Bangladesh, tripartite discussions could have been held much earlier to resolve this appalling situation. During the discussions at Simla, it was well understood by Pakistan that the issue of POWs could not be resolved without the concurrence of Bangladesh and it was in this context that the question of the recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan had come up. President Bhutto

had indicated that such a recognition could take place soon which, unfortunately, had not happened during the past one year. The position of the Bangladesh Government in this matter had been firm that it would not negotiate with Pakistan except on the basis of "sovereign equality."

The Indian delegation pointed out that the Joint Declaration of April 18 was a serious and earnest effort to solve the humanitarian problem. Considering the gravity of the human suffering involved and the extreme urgency of breaking the stalemate, the question of the "recognition of Bangladesh" had been set aside for which President Mujib deserved all the credit. Since the basic condition had been withdrawn to accommodate Pakistan, we expressed the hope that, in accordance with the proposals of the India-Bangladesh Joint Declaration of April 18, the simultaneous repatriation of some 91,000 POWs from India to Pakistan (minus the 195 war criminals to be detained in India as demanded by the Government of Bangladesh) and that of the Pakistani nationals from Bangladesh and Bengalis from Pakistan to their respective homes would start without further delay.

Since Pakistan had understandably shown greatest concern about the early return of the POWs, we took up the question of their repatriation first hoping for a more positive and ready reaction from the Pakistan Government. The main hurdle, we explained again, had been that Bangladesh, being a co-detaining power—and that was not a fiction but was based on the actual fact of the POW surrender to the Joint Command—we could not get Sheikh Mujib's concurrence earlier unless Pakistan recognized the State of Bangladesh. Now that Bangladesh had made a big concession on the "recognition" question in the interest of the humanitarian cause, the decks were clear and we could start the process of repatriation immediately. The Pakistan delegation described as a brilliant stroke the manner in which the condition precedent of the recognition of Bangladesh had been skirted and praised Mrs. Indira Gandhi's statesmanship for achieving this.

To our surprise and dismay, however, they expressed strong opposition to the 195 POWs being held back for trials for their war crimes while we agreed to repatriate the other 91,000-plus POWs immediately to Pakistan. As discussions continued for two days, it became clear to us that Pakistan wanted to have everything her own way without appreciating the enormous difficulties of India and Bangladesh. I recalled how Pakistan in the past months had carried on an unremitting campaign against India all over the world at times with full-page paid advertisements condemning India for not releasing the POWs. Even the womenfolk of some of the POWs were sent to many

countries to malign India terming the continued detention of the POWs as inhuman.

The Pakistani stand caused us serious disappointment at the very start of the negotiations and more so as they repudiated the previous public pronouncements of President Bhutto. Had he not said more than once that, perhaps, one thousand prisoners could be retained but the rest should be sent back without delay? To explain this away, the Pakistani delegation argued that what their President meant was that India could retain some one thousand prisoners so that most of the other POWs were sent back immediately; the President did not mean that he agreed to the trial of the prisoners. To show to the Pakistani side that this argument was untenable, their attention was drawn to President Bhutto's interview of April 3, 1972 to *Newsweek* wherein he stated: He was not apologizing for the excesses committed by the army in East Pakistan. He accepted that they had done very bad things. If Sheikh Mujib wanted to bring some people for trial, Pakistan would be prepared to oblige. Again, in his interview to the Indian weekly *Blitz*, President Bhutto had said that: "If there were charges against 500 or 1,000 people, they can be retained. But why keep the whole lot of the prisoners of war there?"

The Pakistan delegation questioned the right of the Bangladesh Government to try the POWs as war criminals and cavilled at Sheikh Mujib's motivation in holding the trials. It was pointed out to them that Bangladesh's right for trials was supported by the Geneva Convention as well as by the opinion of the International Commission of Jurists.

Having unjustly condemned India in the past for not releasing the POWs, why, we asked, was Pakistan opposed to receiving more than 90,000 POWs whom India was now prepared to release immediately with the approval of the Bangladesh Government? How would they react if India started sending train loads of POWs every day to the Pakistani frontier? Could not the starting of the process of repatriation improve the atmosphere for better understanding between the points of views of Pakistan and Bangladesh? The Pakistan delegation's categorical reply was that they would not agree to the retention of 195 POWs for war crimes and would not accept any POWs unless India committed herself to releasing all of them. They also advanced the argument that there was a commitment by both the parties in the Simla Agreement that they would take no steps which were detrimental to peace and harmonious relations between them. By transferring the POWs for trial to the Bangladesh Government, India would be dishonouring this bilateral agreement.

This provided us with an opportunity to lodge India's strong protest against Pakistan's breach of bilateralism in the Simla Agreement by approaching the International Court of Justice a few months earlier seeking injunction against the transfer of any POWs to the Bangladesh Government for trials by it. This, Haksar pointed out, was a serious breach of the solemn commitment by the two Governments in the Simla Agreement to settle all differences and disputes bilaterally. Why did Pakistan jump to the conclusion that some POWs would be transferred to Bangladesh for trial and why did she not approach the Indian Government for some clarification? Aziz Ahmad's reply was that they had read some press reports to that effect and had actually hoped that the decision of the International Court of Justice would strengthen India's hands in refusing to deliver any POWs on the request of the Bangladesh Government. We continued to maintain that Pakistan had not been honest in approaching the International Court of Justice (and the International Civil Aviation Organization in the matter of overflights between the two countries) without mutual consultations. The argument about strengthening India's position to refuse to transfer the POWs had, in effect, rebounded against Pakistan. Since the Court had been unable to accept Pakistan's plea for an injunction, how could India now say "no" to Bangladesh when she asked for the transfer of 195 POWs to her for trial? Nor would the decision of the ICJ have been binding on Bangladesh as she was not a party to it.

India, the Pakistani delegation was told, had not transferred the POWs for trials in Bangladesh as she wanted to promote peace and goodwill between the three countries by mutual consultations and accommodation. Nothing could have prevented India from leaving a few thousand prisoners behind in Bangladesh after their surrender for that Government to try them. Knowing the background of the massacres and the atrocities committed by the Pakistan army, the fate of the POWs left behind could have been easily imagined. India did not wish to further fan the fires of hatred and hostility on the subcontinent but sought to quench them. This, we explained, had been our consistent motivation and the recent Joint Declaration earnestly aimed at the same objective.

At a later session, the leader of the Pakistan delegation informed us that he had consulted President Bhutto who appreciated the positive aspects of the Joint Declaration, but was of the view that the Pakistan Government simply could not agree to the trial of any POWs. What sort of trials would there be in Bangladesh? He termed them as "Kangaroo-trials" and "Palmtree trials." They argued that in an atmosphere highly charged with emotions, nobody would dare give

evidence for the accused and, if anybody did, he would be shot. Nor would any judge have the courage to give a fair decision. Besides, the Pakistan army would strongly resent some POWs detained behind and put on trial. They would not tolerate the humiliation of their men left behind in Bangladesh to be sacrificed. The repercussions in the Pakistan army and the general public would be very grave. Continuing, Aziz Ahmad said that while his President praised Mrs. Gandhi's genuine efforts towards reconciliation on the subcontinent, President Bhutto wanted also to convey clearly to us that the "war trials will lead to a point of no return."

Aziz Ahmad, who had spent long years in East Pakistan as a civil servant, spoke once or twice disparagingly of Sheikh Mujib, who, he said, could be utterly irrational. The trials were out of sheer vindictiveness on his part. What did Sheikh Mujib hope to achieve with these trials except to ruin all chances of reconciliation? Aziz Ahmad had to be told that whatever his notions about Sheikh Mujib's being petulant or irrational, Shiekh Sahib was the elected representative of the 75 million people. We had to acknowledge his position with respect and had to remember that he had to take into account the feelings of his own nation. Besides, we all had to recognize with gratitude the courageous decision of Sheikh Mujib to go back on his condition demanding "recognition" of Bangladesh before any negotiations with Pakistan could take place. He had now authorized India to negotiate early repatriation on POWs without insisting upon "recognition."

We pointed out our concern that we already had some reports that the Pakistan Government had decided, as a retaliatory step, to detain some 200 Bengalis as hostages and to hold trials against them. Aziz Ahmad, in reply, confirmed this. He said that the war trials by the Bangladesh Government would reopen old wounds and would lead to demands in Pakistan for the trials of 203 Bengalis against whom there was evidence of espionage, sabotage and treason. The trials and counter-trials would lead to a cycle of vengeance and would not promote reconciliation. Haksar further stated that the Indian delegation appreciated Pakistan's difficulties and the strong feelings on the issue of the war trials but the Indian Government was amazed at Pakistan perversely refusing to appreciate the difficulties and the strong feelings of Bangladesh. While offering the Joint Declaration, it was India's responsibility to explain Bangladesh's point of view to the Pakistan Government. First and foremost, there was the question of natural justice when more than a million people had been ruthlessly murdered and there had been thousands of cases of rape, torture and other heinous crimes which had been recorded even by some Pakistani

authors. The whole Bangladesh nation, which had witnessed these harrowing experiences for several months, demanded that the criminals be brought to book. For Sheikh Mujib, the war trails were a solemn commitment which he had repeatedly made to his nation. He had reduced the number to the very minimum, only 195 against whom they found incontrovertible evidence incriminating them of crimes against humanity. There was inexorable national demand in Bangladesh for trials and Sheikh Mujib, as elected leader of the nation, could not disregard it. Pakistan had two options before it: either to accept the return of more than 91,000 POWs to Pakistan while 195 of them remained behind, or to leave all of them behind as 195 could not be released. The genuineness of the India-Bangladesh joint effort to resolve this humanitarian issue should not be underestimated by them.

In reply to the Pakistani argument about "Kangaroo trials," it was pointed out that there would be international lawyers and observers at the trials and internationally accepted judicial procedures would have to be observed. Both Sheikh Mujib and his Foreign Minister Dr. Kamal Hussain had made public statements pledging that India, as a co-detaining power, would also have a heavy responsibility to ensure fair trials.

By the end of the official discussions, we were left in no doubt that Pakistan was in no mood to compromise and would not accept immediate repatriation of tens of thousands of POWs unless the 195 POWs required by Bangladesh for war trials were also released simultaneously. The Pakistani side did not appreciate our repeated pleas that the immediate repatriation of some 91,000 POWs to Pakistan would lead to lowering of temperatures and promote conciliatory attitudes.

Finally, we had to put it bluntly that we on the Indian side had done our very best with clear conscience, and if Pakistan would not accept the repatriation of some 91,000 minus the 195, it was just too bad.

Next, we took up the question of the repatriation of the Pakistani nationals in Bangladesh to which the Pakistan delegation expressed equally strong reservations. We had seen during the past year that Pakistan, while demanding the immediate release of the POWs, had shown little inclination to receive the Pakistani nationals stranded in Bangladesh who were anxious to leave for Pakistan. This indifferent attitude persisted despite repeated reminders that the humanitarian considerations, which they claimed for the repatriation of their people in uniform, must apply equally to the Pakistani civilians.

During our discussions, the Pakistani side questioned the Pakistani nationality of the non-Bengalis wanting to leave Bangladesh and even accused Sheikh Mujib of driving out the Biharis. It was explained to

them that some had made statements before the International Red Cross that they remained Pakistani nationals, owed allegiance to Pakistan and would not accept Bangladesh citizenship. In the given circumstances, the choice of retaining his or her nationality had to be made by the citizen and it was not for the State to impose or deny citizenship. I cited the examples of Pondicherry and Goa where, after the termination of the colonial rule, the people of these territories exercised their right to retain the French or Portuguese nationality or to renounce that and accept the Indian nationality. The Portuguese and the French Governments accepted their nationals. The Pakistani Government, in similar circumstances, could not disown its nationals who wanted to retain their Pakistani nationality. The Pakistani nationals could not have lost their nationality with the emergence of Bangladesh. How could the Pakistani nationals be forced to accept another nationality against their will?

Shunning all legal and moral responsibility, the Pakistan Government offered to accept only those people from Bangladesh who had had domicile in West Pakistan.

Strong resistance to accepting the Pakistani nationals from Bangladesh was also put forward on the Pakistani plea that such huge influx would impose unbearable economic burden on the Pakistan economy. One could hardly appreciate this argument, considering the land-man ratio of Pakistan and Bangladesh, and the marked advantage Pakistan had over Bangladesh in economic development and industrial and technological progress. Besides, the number of Pakistani nationals wanting to come to Pakistan from Bangladesh (approximately 250,000) was nearly equal to the Bengalis leaving Pakistan. The economic argument was, therefore, far from convincing. We repeatedly asked what was Pakistan's concept of "nationality" since they would not accept legally and internationally predicated principles. The Pakistani nationals could not be rendered "stateless" nor could Bangladesh accept them when they had declared that they owed loyalty to Pakistan.

Sir Khizar Hayat Khan's Visit to Rawalpindi to Meet me and the Rebuff by the Pakistan Foreign Office

Here I must digress and record an incident quite unrelated to our official discussions, which caused me great shock and distress. On July 25, i.e., the day after our delegation's arrival in Rawalpindi, I got a telephone call from Sir Khizar Hayat Khan who was Premier of the Punjab before India's partition. He said, having read of my arrival, he

had come to Rawalpindi to meet me because of our great mutual regard and goodwill. His sole purpose was to pay a courtesy call on an old friend and to talk about our personal experiences and about our mutual friends. I was delighted to get his call as I had not met him for a long time.

He added that he had already sent a message to the Pakistan Foreign Office intimating that he had come to see me and that they should kindly approve and inform me about this. He explained that he wanted the Foreign Office to know in advance and he was sure the Foreign Secretary would speak to me the same morning. During our meetings the whole day, I got no message from the Pakistan Foreign Office representatives.

In the evening, Sir Khizar telephoned to find out if the Foreign Secretary had mentioned the matter to me and to fix up the time for the meeting. He expressed surprise when I informed him that no message had been given to me by the Foreign Office people. I, However, promised to raise the question myself the next day. On the afternoon of the 26th, as Haksar, Aziz Ahmad and I were walking together in the hotel corridor, I raised the matter with Aziz Ahmad. I explained how Sir Khizar and I had been good friends and that he had come specially from Lahore to see me. I added that, as Aziz Ahmad knew, Sir Khizar had completely given up politics since 1948 and was leading a retired life.

Without a moment's hesitation, Aziz Ahmad firmly stated that I should not meet Sir Khizar and that they would not approve of that. I was stunned to hear this. What was his reason to insult Sir Khizar and deny me the opportunity to meet an old friend? Did Aziz Ahmad think that Sir Khizar's meeting me was an act hostile to Pakistan? As mentioned in an earlier chapter, I had paid a courtesy call on Sir Khizar in Rawalpindi in 1966 soon after the Tashkent Declaration. I presumed that if Aziz Ahmad had known, he might have seen to it that we would not have met at that time. In the present case, Sir Khizar thought it a courtesy to inform the Foreign Office and the result was this gratuitous insult.

The next morning, when Sir Khizar telephoned I informed him that Aziz Ahmad had objected to our meeting. He was shocked and said good-bye and left for Lahore the same afternoon.

I used to find the attitude of the Foreign Office quite disappointing in other respects also. For example, the members of our delegation were shadowed when they left the hotel even for a walk. Once when I went to the bookshops to buy some Urdu books, the security staff always accompanied me. I suppose, they would explain that it was for

our safety. As against this, when the Pakistan delegation came to India and expressed a wish to go and pray at the historic mosque in New Delhi, we welcomed their suggestion. We felt happy to see them move around. Once they expressed a desire to meet Piloo Mody, an eminent leader of the opposition and an admirer of Bhutto. We encouraged them to do so and made the necessary arrangements.

Talk with President Bhutto

We looked forward to our discussion with President Bhutto hoping for some breakthrough in resolving the deadlock, being ourselves convinced that India and Bangladesh had made a major concession to Pakistan in the Joint Declaration. We met him on July 27 at 7:30 p.m. During the talks that lasted for about three hours, we repeatedly covered the same ground and put forward the same arguments.

As we entered the reception hall of the President's residence, we were pleasantly surprised to see on the wall a life-size painting of the Buddha of exquisite artistic beauty. We could not but admire it and more so in the house of someone who had been given to making such venomous attacks against Hinduism and India.

Aziz Ahmad and Agha Shahi received us and Bhutto joined soon thereafter. As he expressed satisfaction at the present resumption of the dialogue between India and Pakistan, Haksar remarked that the issues vitally involved Bangladesh and it was neither easy nor wise for India to take upon herself the responsibility for questions which were better discussed and settled between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Since that dialogue had not been possible, the Joint Declaration was an earnest endeavour to resolve the humanitarian issues. Mrs. Gandhi's cherished objective, he explained, was to bring about reconciliation between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and it was India's hope that the resolution of the humanitarian problem would promote goodwill and reconciliation.

Bhutto, who naturally was aware of the talks between the two delegations during the past three days, covered the same ground in a long opening statement. On the question of non-recognition of Bangladesh after his promise in Simla, he explained that in the atmosphere of goodwill and understanding that marked his Simla discussions with Mrs. Gandhi, he had informally indicated to her that he would take up the matter of "recognition" with the National Assembly. This was "quite informal—sort of loud thinking." On return from Simla, he had called a meeting of the party's Central Committee at which not a single member favoured his going to the National

Assembly with this proposal as they were convinced that such a suggestion would meet with strong opposition. He, therefore, thought it necessary to mobilize the public opinion and addressed meetings in Lyallpur, Rawalpindi, Karachi and other cities. Whenever he appealed for recognition of Bangladesh, there were always strong protests and turmoil and violence. On some occasions, even shots were fired at these meetings to express resentment at the suggestion. He had to conclude that he must move step by step and must carry the people with him. Pakistan, he pointed out, was having democracy after fifteen years years and the people were very sensitive about their democratic rights. He did not want to be accused of "betrayal" and "sell-out."

He further explained that before going to Simla he had, in consultation with his party colleagues and intellectuals, come to the conclusion that he could not agree to the "recognition" of Bangladesh. It was in the informal atmosphere at Simla, that he had mentioned the possibility of the "recognition." But, on return to Islamabad, he found the situation impossible. He contended that it was not true that he made a promise and had gone back on it.

On his own, Bhutto referred to the question of Pakistan going to the International Court of Justice on the question of the POWs thus flouting her commitment to bilateralism. The only reason he could give was that their Attorney General, after a thorough study, had assured them that Pakistan's case was legally strong and Pakistan would get the necessary injunction. The Pakistan Government was "steamrolled into this step" by their Attorney General. Bhutto said he had been very indignant at the Attorney General's advice and the action taken by him. He had asked him: "Why did you give us such an irresponsible advice? Did you have a girl friend at The Hague that you were so keen to go there?" We did not think it proper to ask President Bhutto why Pakistan did not think it fit to contact India in accordance with the provisions of the Simla Agreement before going to The Hague. Nor did we reiterate what we had already told the Pakistani delegation that since the ICJ had been unable to issue an injunction, the Bangladesh Government could now insist upon the transfer of the 195 POWs to it for trial and India could no more have political or legal basis to refuse Bangladesh's demand as a co-detaining power.

About the war trials, Bhutto said he would be brutally frank and must state that "I simply cannot take the risk." The trial of POWs would be a "point of no return . . . you can throw the whole lot of the POWs in the river Ganges but I cannot agree to any soldiers being held back for trials." He further elaborated that on the issue of POWs there had been threats to his life and he was not, he said, worried about his

personal future, but if democracy was wiped out it would be a disaster for Pakistan. And whom was India going to talk to after that? The Pakistan army and the people of Pakistan would not tolerate the war trials of any Pakistani soldiers being held up in India and he would personally never agree to it. On his own, he tried to explain the wording of his interview to the editor of the *Blitz*. It was true that when Karanjia saw him, he had told him that India could keep a thousand or two thousand soldiers but the rest should be sent back. "I did not say that they can be tried, I only said they can be kept as Amanat (trust)." He wanted India to appreciate his inability to acquiesce to war trials.

In regard to the acceptance of the Pakistani nationals from Bangladesh, Bhutto reaffirmed the strong opposition which his delegation had already displayed though he advanced quite a different argument. He said it was not a question of one Bangladeshi going and one Pakistani coming, it was not an economic question. His problem was that his constituency, the state of Sindh, would not accept the new influx and that was where the newly arrived Biharis would migrate. Karachi was already overcrowded with non-Sindhis and any additional arrival of Biharis would lead to tensions and conflicts. "I come from Sindh and that is my constituency. I know their problem and I owe something to my constituency." During the recent disturbances in Sindh, All-India Radio, according to Bhutto, had been doing propaganda that Sindhi culture was being destroyed: Sindhis said they did not want Biharis and he could not accept them. He could think of taking some people—the divided families, and those who had West Pakistani domicile.

We asked why Pakistan was not prepared to accept her own nationals who had stood by Pakistan during the war and had affirmed their allegiance to Pakistan. How could they be forced to live in a foreign country? "Nationality" was not a fictional concept and how could Pakistan flout her legal and moral responsibilities to her nationals? If domicile was the criterion, did a Pakistani living in London, Tehran or Afghanistan lose his nationality? With Bhutto's vehement and racy style of discussion, we got no answers to these questions.

Before leaving Bhutto, the leader of the Indian delegation again appealed to him to agree to the starting of the repatriation of the three categories of the half million people detained in three countries against their will. This situation was a source of human suffering and tension. As ships started bringing the repatriates and trains came loaded with the POWs uniting these people with their families, tension would ease and

the atmosphere would improve for further negotiations even on the question of the war trials. Bhutto again categorically asserted that he would never agree to the war trials of the Pakistani soldiers nor would he accept the Pakistani nationals in Bangladesh except those who had their domicile in West Pakistan and, perhaps, some others with close relations there.

The next evening we left for New Delhi disappointed that, with the best intentions, we could make no progress in Islamabad for early resolution of the vast humanitarian problem of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi nationals detained away from their homes for a long time. What encouraged me was that there had been a very frank and thorough exchange of views with the Pakistan Foreign Office and at the highest level with the President of Pakistan. It was also happily agreed that the discussion would be resumed in New Delhi on August 18.

I was, in any case, anxious to get back to New Delhi as I had to accompany the Prime Minister to Canada in two days for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in Ottawa. How ingenious could be those responsible for Pakistani propaganda, that as our plane landed at Ottawa, there were a score of Pakistanis with banners and slogans condemning India for her inhuman behaviour in holding up Pakistani POWs for the past eight months. Wherever the Indian Prime Minister went to other cities in Canada after the Conference, the Pakistani group was always there in advance with their banners, demonstrations and denunciatory slogans.

India-Pakistan Meeting to Settle the Question of Some 91,000 POWs and Other Humanitarian Problems

Before the scheduled meeting of the Indian and Pakistani delegations in New Delhi on August 18, we witnessed some momentous political developments in Pakistan. The new democratic Constitution had been framed which, in the words of the President of Pakistan, Chaudhary Fazal Elahi, successfully achieved "the completion of political recovery and realization of democratic ideals." On August 12, Z.A. Bhutto, erstwhile President, was elected as Prime Minister of Pakistan under the new Constitution which vested him with wide political powers as Head of Government.

Bhutto's party the PPP, which he founded and of which he was the leader during the elections, had won an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly securing 104 out of 146 seats. The nation had thus reposed full confidence in him through free and fair elections in

Pakistan. The establishment of true democracy in Pakistan for the first time had aroused general satisfaction all over the country. Even the well-known opposition leader Wali Khan, praised Bhutto for having brought social and economic order to the country and for having led it to democracy.

In India, the reaction to these developments was highly favourable. The Government and the people of India foresaw a happier future for Indo-Pak relations with the advent of democracy in Pakistan. Prime Minister Gandhi, in her message to Bhutto, expressed the hope "that with a vigorous and responsive parliamentary system of government functioning in the countries of the subcontinent, the problems that we face in common will be resolved through goodwill and discussions and we shall be able to lighten the burden of our people." Similarly, President V.V. Giri, in his greetings to the President of Pakistan, Fazal Elahi, referred to the prospects of amicable settlement of Indo-Pak problems in a spirit of goodwill and understanding leading to a durable peace in the subcontinent.

We in the Ministry of External Affairs fully favoured and admired the spirit behind these messages by our President and the Prime Minister. Though someone pointed out that it was not customary to exchange such greetings between the Heads of Government when the two countries have no diplomatic relations, it was rightly felt that it would have been quite unbecoming and preposterous to stand on protocalaire conventions and not to convey felicitations and friendly feelings on these historic political developments in Pakistan, which had brought great joy to the people of Pakistan and augured well for Indo-Pak relations. We also thought that these messages would improve the atmosphere for the forthcoming official-level meeting to be held in New Delhi on August 18.

What I found of particular satisfaction, besides hopes of better bilateral relations, was Bhutto's reference to the recognition of Bangladesh in his broadcast of August 14. While referring to the resolution of the National Assembly empowering the Government to accord de jure recognition to Bangladesh at an appropriate time, he expressed his distress that "whispering still continues against the acceptance of reality." He questioned the reckless motives of such people who refused "to accept the reality."

In his reply to Mrs. Gandhi's message, Bhutto had expressed the hope that the forthcoming Indo-Pakistan talks would lead to normalization of the situation in the subcontinent.

Agreement Reached Between India and Pakistan with the Concurrence of Bangladesh on the Vast Humanitarian Problems Left over by the 1971 War

According to the agreed schedule, the Pakistani delegation arrived in New Delhi on August 18 and there were ten days of extensive and hard negotiations between the two delegations. A great deal of time was taken up in stressing the respective points of view on the same lines as I had already reported after the Islamabad negotiations between July 24 and July 31. The Pakistani delegation had constantly to consult their Prime Minister, and once by a special flight to Islamabad, while the leader of the Indian delegation had regular exchanges with the Bangladesh Prime Minister and his Foreign Minister to ascertain their views and to get their approval.

Finally, all the controversial issues were resolved and the agreement was signed on August 28 between P.N. Haksar, leader of the Indian delegation and Aziz Ahmad, the leader of the Pakistani delegation.

As a result of the agreement, the three Governments undertook to start immediate and simultaneous repatriation of some 400,000 men, women and children in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh who had been detained away from their homes for the past twenty months.

On the difficult question of the war crime trials of the 195 POWs by the Bangladesh Government, it was agreed that they would be detained in India and not tried during the three-way repatriation. The Pakistan Government agreed to release the 203 Bangladeshis whom it had threatened with criminal trials in Pakistan as a retaliatory action. This was a happy decision as large-scale repatriation to Pakistan and Bangladesh and the recognition, in due course, of Bangladesh by Pakistan, we felt sure, would create a better atmosphere for solving the question of the trials of the 195 POWs. It was agreed that India would also participate with Bangladesh and Pakistan in discussing the future of these POWs held back in India. On the question of non-Bengalis who had opted for repatriation to Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan, on humanitarian considerations, agreed to receive a substantial number of additional non-Bengalis from Bangladesh apart from those who had their domicile in West Pakistan. There was a great sense of relief in all the three countries as this agreement was the biggest breakthrough towards the normalization of relations in the subcontinent since the Simla Accord of July 1972. On return to Rawalpindi from New Delhi, the leader of the Pakistan delegation stated in a press conference that Pakistan would soon be recognizing Bangladesh. I had reason to hope that this agreement would prove a major step towards reconciliation and cooperation on the subcontinent.

since India had been charged with the responsibility of coordinating g and implementing the three-way repatriation agreement in consultation with the Governments of Bangladesh and Pakistan, we started working on it immediately and finalized the plans and the timetable within two weeks. This had also required discussions with the international agencies willing to assist in this huge task especially with the UN High Commission for Refugees which had agreed to provide airlift for the repatriation of more than 300,000 people between Pakistan and Bangladesh. For the approximately 91,000 POWs in India, we made arrangements to send them by trains to the Wagah checkpost on the Punjab border.

As a result of this detailed and expeditious planning, the movement of these people to their respective homes based on the principle of simultaneity started within three weeks of the signing of the agreement on this subject. The stupendous task of three-way mass movement of peoples was completed on April 30, 1974, when the last batch of about 700 POWs crossed the Wagah checkpost into Pakistan along with their Commander, Lt. General A.K. Niazi.

India, I felt, had every reason to be gratified that she had fulfilled her responsibilities for the final solution of these humanitarian problems created by the upheavals and wars of 1971.

Even by the middle of March, with most of the repatriation having taken place, we had started thinking in terms of further steps towards reconciliation and normalization of relations between the three countries. The Pakistan Government, having accorded de jure recognition to Bangladesh in the month of February, another major hurdle to a direct tripartite dialogue had been removed. It was thus opportune time to tackle, first of all, the question of the 195 Pakistani POWs detained in India whom Bangladesh had decided to try for war crimes. India had done the soundings and some persuasion with the two Governments and it was agreed to hold a meeting in New Delhi at the beginning of April.

Tripartite Meeting to Decide the Fate of the 195 POWs Held for War Crimes

The Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Bangladesh and India met in New Delhi on April 8 and 9 to discuss further steps towards normalization of relations between the three countries. Of crucial importance was the question about the future of 195 POWs whom Bangladesh had charged

with war crimes such as crimes against humanity and genocide. As was my experience in the previous two bilateral agreements, in this case also the negotiations were quite difficult and the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Dr. Kamal Hussain, and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Aziz Ahmad, were daily in contact with Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Prime Minister Bhutto respectively to sort out some inexorable issues.

Even well before these negotiations, Prime Minister Bhutto had made an appeal to the Government and people of Bangladesh to forgive and forget the mistakes of the past in order to promote reconciliation. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had also risen to the occasion and had displayed magnanimity and generosity of spirit. He had appealed to the people of Bangladesh to forget and forgive the atrocities, the massacre and the destruction committed in Bangladesh in 1971 and to display the courage and bigness to make a fresh start.

At the early stage of the discussions, Aziz Ahmad said that his Government condemned and deeply regretted any crimes that may have been committed. While discussing this intractable problem, each of the three Ministers finally came to the conclusion that the objective uppermost of the three Governments must be reconciliation, peace and friendship in the subcontinent after the horrors of 1971. As a result of these exchanges for two days, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Dr. Kamal Hussain, after several talks with his Prime Minister stated that his Government had decided not to proceed with the trials as an act of clemency.

Finally, the tripartite agreement was signed on April 9 by the three Foreign Ministers leading to the decision that these 195 Pakistani POWs would also be returned to Pakistan. This was the result of statesmanship shown by the three Heads of Government with the larger vision of a happy future for the subcontinent by forgetting and forgiving the bitter memories of the past. Above all, in my view, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, deserved the highest praise for his high-mindedness in agreeing to release those Pakistani soldiers even when he had repeatedly assured his nation that the criminal trials would be held against them in accordance with the provisions of the UN General Assembly and the rules of International Law.

While expressing their gratification at the Agreement, the Ministers reaffirmed the vital stake of the 700 million people of the three countries in reconciliation, peace and progress in the subcontinent.

Bilateral Agreement between India and Pakistan

On the same day, a bilateral agreement was signed between the Minister of External Affairs of India, Sardar Swaran Singh, and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Aziz Ahmad. They announced their decision to hold early discussions for resumption of postal and telecommunication links and restoration of travel facilities between the two countries. Another important provision of this bilateral agreement was the commitment by the two Governments to locate the missing military and para-military personnel in the two countries.

With a view to overall normalization of relations, the two Ministers agreed to take further steps to implement other provisions of the Simla Agreement.

With the trilateral agreement between the three Governments and the bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan, I hoped for a bright future of friendly relations and peaceful cooperation between the three countries bearing in mind, of course, that it would require patient efforts over a long period. It was, however, agreed with Pakistan that we should at least start our negotiations on resumption of travel facilities and telecommunications. The date fixed for that was June 10.

Little did I realize that within a few weeks of the signing of the two agreements, an event would take place which would cast a dark shadow on Indo-Pak relations.

9

India's Nuclear Explosion on May 18, 1974: International Reaction and its Impact on Indo-Pakistan Relations

International Reaction

India exploded underground its first nuclear device in the early morning of May 18, 1974. I was in the Ministry before 6:00 a.m. as I had instructions that on receipt of the final signal I should send for some dozen Ambassadors and High Commissioners including those from the nuclear powers and Canada with which we had bilateral agreements for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The purpose of calling them was to personally convey the news to them and, also, to explain that this test was a part of our research in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. I was also to assure their Governments that India was opposed to the military uses of nuclear power.

As could be expected, the news of this successful underground nuclear test in the Rajasthan desert immediately spread all over India and abroad. In fact, that very morning one of the Ambassadors, while thanking me for the news I was giving him, told me that he had already received the feedback from his home capital conveying the exact timing and magnitude of the explosion.

While expressing satisfaction at the results of this experiment, Prime Minister Gandhi explained at a news conference that the test "formed a part of the research for peaceful uses of atomic energy" and firmly reiterated that the country was committed to peaceful uses of nuclear power. She also commended the significant achievement by India's scientists and stated that the underground test "was a good and clearn job." The objective of the experiment according to our scientists was to develop new technology for exploring minerals and other underground resources. The plutonium used in the explosion was of about 15 kilotonnes magnitude and had been produced at an Indian reactor.

The Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. H.N. Sethna, revealed that there had been no significant radio activity even at a height of 30 metres as surveyed by helicopters after half an hour of the explosion and that this test had been undertaken to keep abreast with the developments in the nuclear technology particularly with reference to its use in the field of mineral and earth moving operations. There was general satisfaction in the country that India had achieved a significant technological breakthrough in its atomic programme for peaceful purposes.

A couple of days later, I accompanied the Prime Minister and Dr. Sethna to the site of the explosion in the Rajasthan desert. Dr. Sethna explained at the site how the test had been a "completely contained explosion." To a layman visiting the site, it appeared as a marvel of scientific accomplishment. The explosion was conducted 100 metres underground by using what he described as "an implosion device." The colossal crater created and an artificial hill formed as a result of the explosion and the signals it sent to the remotest corners of the earth, gave some idea of the stupendous force released by what had been a small nuclear device.

Dr. Sethna gave some other details at the site and also explained how experts in a helicopter did the aerial survey within half an hour of the explosion and had found no significant radio activity even at a height of 30 metres.

What the scientists in those days considered a remarkable achievement was that India had conducted the very first nuclear test underground. As against that, the five nuclear powers had conducted their first nuclear tests on the ground or in the atmosphere with the resultant atmospheric fallout. Each of them had taken more than seven years to conduct the first underground test. This nuclear explosion by India caused considerable discussion internationally and our public declaration to use this technique only for peaceful purposes posed a dilemma for the nuclear powers. India had become a "nuclear power" – or at least had ceased to be a "non-nuclear power." At the same time, India had not become a "nuclear weapon power" as she had firmly declared to the international community that she would not use nuclear energy for military purposes and would, as always, remain opposed to the military uses of nuclear weapons.

A number of Governments including those of the United States, United Kingdom and Japan expressed their serious concern at the test as they thought it ran counter to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The State Department in Washington said that the "United States had always been against nuclear proliferation and that their position remained the same."

The Western Governments generally condemned the test while the East European countries and some of the third world countries not only accepted India's peaceful intentions, but even appreciated her achievement. Interestingly enough, the Chairman of the French Atomic Energy Commission, Andre Giraud, complimented the Indian scientists "on the crossing of a new and difficult step towards the mastery of nuclear techniques." He praised the brilliant quality of the scientists and the technicians working in the Indian Atomic Energy Commission.

It was the Canadian Government which reacted strongly to our nuclear test and within four days suspended all aid to the Indian atomic energy programme. The Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, even asked other Governments for joint consultations on the international implications of the Indian action. We had had very useful Canadian assistance in building up two nuclear reactors and we felt we owed it to them to explain all the circumstances and our objectives underlying our experiment.

Talks with the Canadian Government

As suggested by Sharp, I was deputed by the Prime Minister at the beginning of August to have talks in Ottawa with the Canadian Foreign Office, the Minister of External Affairs and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

During three days of discussions in the Canadian Foreign Office and with Sharp, my aim was to convince them of the public assurances given by our Prime Minister that India would use the nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes. It was also pointed out that, while the nuclear powers had been carrying out nuclear tests in the atmosphere involving serious radio active fallout, the Indian test was underground and no radio activity had been found even in the immediate vicinity of the test site. To allay their suspicion of any plutonium from Indo-Canadian reactors having been used for the test, I explained that those reactors were strictly safeguarded under the bilateral agreements.

In the three long sessions in the Canadian Foreign Office, there were much more intensive discussions about India's nuclear test and the reasons for the adverse reaction of the Canadian Government. When the Canadian side repeatedly referred to the obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, I pointed out to them that India had refused to sign the treaty as it was highly discriminatory against the "non-nuclear powers." Being an unequal treaty, India had been totally opposed to it. As a personal witness, I explained to them that it was on July 1, 1968 that the question of the signing of the treaty in Moscow

had come up when I was Ambassador there. In accordance with the instructions of my Government, I had made it clear to the Soviet Foreign Office that India could not agree to a treaty imposing mandatory obligation on the "non-nuclear powers" which the "nuclear powers" themselves were not prepared to accept. While the "nuclear powers" wanted to retain full freedom to carry on nuclear tests in the atmosphere and underground, they were laying down the law that no "non-nuclear power" dare ever undertake these tests. Thus, they wanted to retain their freedom to proliferate nuclear weapons horizontally and vertically—which they had been doing for the past seven years—but, at the same time they were determined to ensure that those who were "unarmed" must remain "disarmed". During further discussions, I also pointed out that what was highly objectionable from our point of view was the ban which the treaty had imposed even on peaceful nuclear explosions. In this case also, the "nuclear powers" retained the right to continue such tests. Both India and Brazil had taken strong exception to this aspect of the treaty.

I was asked what objective India was trying to achieve by the so-called nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. I told them that they very well knew how USA and USSR had been carrying on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and among those purposes were excavation of canals, underground mining, earth-moving and natural gas stimulation, etc. By our nuclear explosion, India, I said, was not trying to gatecrash into the nuclear club, but was solely concerned with the possible peaceful uses of atomic energy.

Another question raised somewhat trenchantly was that after all there was no difference in the nuclear technology whether used for peaceful purposes or for nuclear weapons. The only reply I could give was that what counted was the intention for which a certain technology was to be used by the particular Government.

In the course of the discussions with Sharp, he asked me on two occasions, if the Government of India could announce that it would undertake no more nuclear tests. In that case, Canada could, he suggested, reconsider her decision about future cooperation with India. Without any hesitation, I told him that the Indian Prime Minister had already declared that the test was purely for peaceful purposes. Any weapon programme would require several more tests. While I did not envisage any more tests in the foreseeable future, it would not be possible for my Government to make a public declaration under the pressure of the Canadian Government. Parliament and public opinion in India would strongly resent what would appear to be our submission to the dictation of a foreign Government, howsoever friendly. Sharp

stated that only with such a declaration by India, could the nuclear cooperation be restored by the Canadian Government. He also broadly hinted that if nuclear technology for special peaceful projects was needed by India, she could borrow it for that purposes from one of the nuclear powers. I made no comments on that suggestion.[1]

Sharp also raised the question how India could spend such vast amounts on a nuclear test when she had her serious problems of economic development. I could reply only by citing what our Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. H.N. Sethna, had publicly stated. According to him, the test had cost about Rs. 300 million = $ 400,000. He had added that the Atomic Energy Commission had spent seven times as much on nuclear research in agriculture and medicine.

In spite of these extensive exchanges, we were unable to secure the understanding of the Canadian Government during my visit. They were, however, unable to point out if India had violated by her nuclear test any bilateral or international agreement. We were, in any case, ready to forgo the Canadian Government's help if it was not prepared to accept our assurances of using the nuclear energy only for peaceful

[1]Such a suggestion was made a year later in April-May 1975, at Kingston, Jamaica, during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference. As a result of my talk with the Canadian delegation the previous evening, we knew that the subject of India's nuclear test would be raised the next morning. When I mentioned this to my Prime Minister, she said that it was quite understandable and we would deal with it appropriately.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Prime Minister Trudeau expressed anxiety about India's nuclear explosion. The Indian Prime Minister reiterated the position of the Government of India and stated that we were interested to use nuclear technology, when required, only for major underground operations. Wilson inquired why India could not, in such circumstances, approach a nuclear power, possibly implying U.K., for assistance rather than developing own technology. Such a technology, he assured, could be available from the shelf of a nuclear power. The Prime Minister of India in a gentle risposte stated that India must pursue her national policies of scientific and technological research and would not like to be a supplicant to a foreign Government's favour to pursue India's peaceful programmes.

It was, however, President Nyerere of Tanzania who stood up to protest against the British Prime Minister's suggestion which he felt was rather presumptuous. Under Nehru's far-sighted and dynamic planning, he said, India's scientific, technological and industrial progress was an inspiration to the other developing countries. How could those who were busy manufacturing nuclear weapons of mass destruction, arrogate to themselves the right to forbid others even to do research in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy? He commended India's technological achievement and praised the Indian Prime Minister for her forthright statement to the international community that India would use this technology only for peaceful purposes.

purposes with no intention to use it for military purposes. Canada continued to maintain her reservations about further nuclear cooperation with India.

Later, we had discussions in New Delhi in January 1975, and March 1976, when Ivan Head, the Chief Foreign Policy Adviser to the Canadian Premier, visited India with two other colleages. I had long talks with them together with my other colleagues and scientists. We again tried to reassure them of our commitment not to use nuclear energy for military purposes and expressed the hope that our cooperation would continue. In the final stages, the Canadian Government wanted us to give an undertaking that not only the Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant reactors set up with Canadian cooperation would be under international safeguards, but all other nuclear facilities in India should also be subjected to similar safeguards. Since we could not agree to this, the Canadian Government on May 18, 1976, permanently stopped its nuclear cooperation with India.

While on my way to Ottawa in August 1974, I met Henry Kissinger, U.S. Secretary of State, in Washington on August 2. I found a much better understanding from the U.S. Government as it was agreed in principle that the Indo-American Atomic Agreement for supply of enriched uranium-235 fuel elements for the Tarapore Atomic Power Plant near Bombay would continue. The only condition laid down was that our previous agreement should be rephrased to specify more expressly that these nuclear materials would be used only for power generation at this particular plant and nowhere else.

The Impact of India's Nuclear Explosion on Indo-Pakistan Relations

The very next day after India's nuclear test, on May 19, Prime Minister Bhutto at a press conference in Lahore called India's nuclear explosion a dangerous development and a threat to Pakistan. He said, "Pakistan is determined not to be intimidated." He saw in the test India's designs for domination over the subcontinent and pledged that Pakistan would never submit to "nuclear blackmail."

The Pakistan Prime Minister announced that he was formally approaching the UN Secretary General and was also sending his Foreign Secretary to various countries to explain Pakistan's point of view. Other immediate steps taken by Pakistan included raising the issue with the U.S. Government and at the CENTO meeting.

During his press conference, Bhutto also referred to the suggestion of a no-war pact which India had made during the Simla Conference. He said: ". . . Now that India has begun to brandish its nuclear sword, I declare that the question of concluding such a pact simply does not arise."

On the Indian side, utmost efforts were made to allay Pakistan's anxieties. The Minister of External Affairs, Swaran Singh, in a statement on May 21, reiterated India's commitment to the Simla Agreement with a view to settle all differences with Pakistan peacefully and through bilateral negotiations. He expressed the hope that Pakistan's misconception and apprehension would be removed after a "cooler reflection and a more objective and realistic assessment." On May 22, Mrs. Indira Gandhi sent a personal letter to Bhutto through the Swiss Embassy to assure him that the Indian nuclear explosion was entirely for peaceful purposes. She reaffirmed the Government of India's sincere resolve to settle all disputes with Pakistan through peaceful and bilateral negotiations. She also made it clear that India had no desire to acquire nuclear weapons nor to hold out any threat to her neighbours. She wanted Bhutto to believe that the Indian experiment was purely for peaceful purposes and with a view to acquire the necessary knowledge and technology for that objective. She reiterated that India had always condemned and would continue to condemn military uses of nuclear energy as a threat to humanity.

In reply to Mrs. Gandhi's letter, Prime Minister Bhutto imputed military motives to India's scientific and speace research charging India with designs of dismembering Pakistan and to get out of the no-war pact offer which India had made earlier. He warned that India's nuclear explosion had introduced an unbalancing factor in the normalization of relations between the two countries.

Pakistan's reaction was, of course, a serious setback to our hopes for further immediate steps towards improvement of bilateral relations as a result of the recently signed trilateral and bilateral agreements. Prime Minister Bhutto had conveyed to us in strong terms that India's nuclear test had seriously disturbed the equilibrium and tranquillity in the subcontinent.

So far as the strong public reaction in Pakistan was concerned, I found Bhutto's argument quite persuasive. He said: "When Pakistan's attempts to obtain even spare parts under treaty commitments cause an outcry in India not only unjustified but totally disproportionate, it would be unnatural to expect public opinion in Pakistan not to react to the chauvinistic jubilation widely expressed in India at the acquisition of a nuclear status." He wanted that there should be an obligation by

some nuclear weapon States to defend a non-nuclear weapon State against any nuclear threat.

On May 31, we received a communication from the Pakistan Government cancelling the talks for restoration of postal, telecommunication and travel facilities which were scheduled to take place on June 10. It wanted such discussions to wait for a more favourable atmosphere between the two countries. Thus, one serious fallout of India's nuclear explosion was that it had cast a dark shadow in India-Pakistan relations.

Efforts to Resume Talks

From the beginning of June, we got reports of large-scale troop movements and manoeuvres by Pakistan on the India-Pakistan boundaries. The reason given by Pakistan was that these were some sort of anti-smuggling measures, but certainly the nature and the extent of these movements belied that argument. On the other hand, the Pakistani side alleged that it was India that had been having abnormal troop movements on her border.

For whatever reason, Pakistan wanted to create an impression that there was some threat from India in addition to her propaganda about India's nuclear blackmail. Further allegations were made by Prime Minister Bhutto to the effect that there was a simultaneous movement of Afghan troops and concentration of Indian troops on the Sialkot border. These accusations provided Bhutto with a justification to demand that the United States should honour its obligations to resume supply of arms to Pakistan. His words were: "We are entitled to arms. There is a legal obligation. Otherwise, the United States should renounce the arms agreements it had signed with Pakistan." To stress his demand for immediate supply of arms, he also charged India with moving a large number of troops on the Kashmir frontier.

To make matters worse, Bhutto made a speech in the National Assembly on June 7, which we in the Foreign Office and our Council of Ministers found highly offensive. Bhutto had said that India had been an implacable opponent of Pakistan. He referred to India's economic problems and said: "With many Indian citizens starving and going without food, when the armed forces have been used to suppress the people and kill people who had come out on the streets because they are hungry," the Indian Government had made tremendous sacrifices to acquire nuclear status. In these circumstances, India must have a larger objective than boosting her prestige, and "all roads lead to the conclusion that India's brandishing of the nuclear sword is to extract

political concessions from Pakistan and establish her hegemony in the subcontinent."

In regard to the accusation of India's stratagem to exercise hegemony over the subcontinent, no other neighbouring country, including Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Iran criticized her nuclear explosion nor did they see it as a threat to their security. The Afghan and Nepali Foreign Offices made statements to the effect that they believed in India's assurance that the test was strictly for peaceful purposes. Similarly, Dr. Kamal Hussain, the Bangladesh Foreign Minister, expressed satisfaction at India's commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The popular Sri Lankan reaction could be seen from the editorial of the *Ceylon Daily News* which commented: "The test has by no means affected the common desire of India and Sri Lanka for closer economic cooperation."

Bhutto's National Assembly speech was discussed in the Council of Ministers and the Minister for External Affairs, Swaran Singh, lodged a strong protest on June 15 with Aziz Ahmad, the Pakistan Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs. It was pointed out to the Pakistan Minister that Bhutto's statements were not only against the letter and spirit of the Simla Agreement, but also "constituted gross interference in India's internal affairs." He pointed out that the Indian Government had done its best and was prepared to do even more to allay any genuine misgivings that Pakistan might have about the peaceful nature of India's nuclear energy programme.

This protest did have some salutary effect. Aziz Ahmad in a reply stated that Bhutto's remarks had been taken out of their context, and again asked for some concrete evidence that India would not use the nuclear potential for military purposes. Curiously enough, he added that "the least that needs to be done in this connection is that before the talks are resumed Pakistan should be publicly assured that India still stands committed to those provisions of the Simla Agreement that forbid the use of force or threat of force including use and threat of nuclear weapons." This suggestion of Pakistan had already been amply conceded from the very beginning in the statements of the Minister of External Affairs of India and through the letter of May 22 of Prime Minister Gandhi.

On August 1, Swaran Singh again stated in the Upper House of Parliament what India had made repeatedly clear, that we remained committed to all the provisions of the Simla Agreement and, in particular, that there should be no threat or the use of force against each other and all differences should be settled through peaceful means bilaterally. He suggested that talks should be resumed and serious

efforts made to implement the other provisions of the Simla Agreement. The next day, in a letter these views were also communicated by the Indian Minister to his Pakistani counterpart. To our relief, Aziz Ahmad's reply of August 10 was quite conciliatory and he agreed to the resumption of the talks and suggested September 12 for the meeting of the two delegations.

Resumption of Negotiations

In response to the invitation of the Pakistan Government, I reached Islamabad on September 10. After three days of talks with the Pakistan Foreign Secretary, Agha Shahi, we both signed three agreements to resume postal and telecommunications links and restore travel facilities which had been suspended for the past three years. An additional protocol was also signed on group visits of pilgrims to shrines in either country. During the discussions, we also agreed that further negotiations should start early for restoration of trade and cultural exchanges and to resume overflights and air links between the two countries.

On the whole, I was favourably impressed with the amicable attitude of the Pakistan Government and its desire to remove the existing barriers in our relations. During my talks in Islamabad, I brought into relief the point that we both had to remember that, apart from the great deal of patience and perseverance, it would require continued firm commitments to the principles of peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty if we had to achieve good-neighbourly relations and cooperation in various fields.

In the fourth week of November, we sent our delegation to Rawalpindi to discuss overflights and resumption of air links between India and Pakistan. At the same time, we invited a delegation from Pakistan to discuss bilateral trade relations. The civil aviation talks unfortunately broke down and the main reason for that was our insistence that Pakistan should withdraw the complaint from ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) which she had lodged against India when we had banned Pakistani overflights from February 4, 1971. We had taken this strong action because an Indian Airlines Fokker Friendship plane had been hijacked to Lahore and had been blown up there with the connivance and in the presence of the Pakistani authorities and to the rejoicing of the public in Lahore and other places. The Pakistan Government authorities had granted political asylum to the hijackers calling them freedom fighters." In the negotiations, our delegation argued that bilateralism could be implemented only if the

case from the ICAO was withdrawn. The Pakistani side, however, was not inclined to withdraw the case which, according to us, went against the Simla Accord laying down that all differences and disputes should be settled bilaterally.

In spite of the failure of the talks, our delegation found the atmosphere cordial and a desire on the Pakistani side also to meet again in December for talks to resolve the stalemate.

The delegations which met in New Delhi for trade between India and Pakistan were able to sign an agreement to lift the embargo on trade and agreed to extend to each other the most favoured nation treatment. At last, the two close neighbours could hope to have normal commercial relations after nearly four years of interruption.

As a follow-up of the trade agreement, a shipping protocol was signed with Pakistan on January 15, 1975 restoring direct shipping services between India and Pakistan.

American Resumption of Arms Supplies to Pakistan

The visit of Dr. Henry Kissinger, the U.S. Secretary of State, to New Delhi on October 27, 1974, had made a very positive contribution to Indo-U.S. relations. During the talks, he was able to assuage India's serious grievance about the U.S. policies at the time of the Bangladesh struggle and during the Indo-Pakistan war of December 1971.

As a result of Dr. Kissinger's talks with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, we were able to build up good understanding and arrived at agreements for active cooperation in the future in various fields. I found Dr. Kissinger at his best in generating goodwill in what had been an extremely strained relationship by paying handsome tributes to India's policies and by assuring beneficial cooperation based on "equality and mutual respect." For example, speaking at the Indian Council of World Affairs on October 28, he praised Nehru's policies of non-alignment which had been dubbed as "immoral" since the days of John Foster Dulles. Dr. Kissinger said that Indo-American relations had "tended to oscillate between high expectation and deep suspicion," but now "a more mature and durable relationship is emerging." He added that the new American view of international relations arising out of "the transition from a bipolar world locked in confrontation and seemingly destined for some final encounter to the new world of dispersed power and reduced tension" owed much to the ideas of Nehru, under whom "India sought to deflect, moderate and redirect the forces of frozen hostility between the superpowers and their insistent efforts to enlist other nations on one side or the other." "It is not

necessary," he continued, "to debate now whether the United States should have welcomed the concept at the time in order to agree that in the present world it is for nations such as India an altogether understandable and practical position. The United States accepts non-alignment. In fact, America sees a world of free, independent, sovereign States as in its own interest."

He also addressed a press conference in New Delhi at my request where more than 150 representatives of the Indian and foreign press were present. He spoke on international issues and on our bilateral relations and dealt with questions in a manner that aroused considerable understanding for American policies.

I also invited him to a small dinner for about 40 intellectuals where there were free exchanges of views with no holds barred. At times the criticism of U.S. policies was unsparing but all present immensely enjoyed the frank discussions with frequent repartees.

As a result of this visit, a joint Indo-American Commission was set up to promote economic, commercial, scientific, technological, educational and cultural cooperation between India and America. We also agreed to set up an Indo-American Business Council so that leading businessmen and industrialists could carry on a constant dialogue with each other to promote industrial and technological collaboration. All in all, Dr. Kissinger's visit promised a much brighter future of Indo-American relations.

A few months later, the U.S. Government's decision to supply arms to Pakistan led to serious protests from India.

During December and January the Pakistani press had been carrying on adverse propaganda against India. In the third week of January 1975, Prime Minister Bhutto himself in an interview to the *New York Times* correspondent in Islamabad accused India of being in an expansionist mood which he said was causing serious anxiety among the Pakistanis. He referred to the nuclear explosion and to the state of Sikkim becoming a member of the Indian Union as a result of the general referendum and the voting of the Legislative Assembly.

While accusing her of hegemonistic designs, Bhutto sermonized India to play a modest role and "not aspire to control the destiny of the region and dearly pretend to be the mother India feeding her children." He also disclosed in the interview that he would make a strong bid at Washington to quash the U.S. embargo to supply arms to Pakistan.

Prime Minister Bhutto visited Washington in the first week of February 1975, and on February 24 an announcement was made lifting the ten-year-old arms embargo against supply of arms to India and Pakistan. In India, the reaction was quite strong as we had seen how

the supply of American arms had frequently led to tensions and conflicts between India and Pakistan. We were particularly reminded of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's assurances to Prime Minister Nehru in 1954 that American arms supplied to Pakistan were only meant to combat aggression by international communism and that he would use his constitutional authority to see that Pakistan did not use these arms against India. When this actually happened in the 1965 war, the American President could do little to prevent it.

Our Ambassador in Washington pointed out that the latest U.S. announcement showed that the Administration's policy towards the subcontinent "is based on the concept of power balance through supply of arms—a policy that had failed in the subcontinent and some other adjoining areas." We considered this induction of arms all the more deplorable as we were slowly trying to normalize our relations and establishing mutual trust and cooperation with Pakistan.

Prime Minister Gandhi stated on February 26 that the resumption of arms supply by the United States to Pakistan amounted to reopening of the old wounds and that it hindered the process of healing and normalization of relations between India and Pakistan. By this decision, she said, it became manifest that the "policy-makers of that great country continued to subscribe to the fallacy of equating Pakistan with India. It is this policy which has caused tension in the subcontinent." Thus, somewhat suddenly, a new adverse factor was introduced in the Indo-Pakistan relations through this decision of the U.S. Government.

The Pakistan Government naturally derided India's reaction to lifting of the embargo. Prime Minister Bhutto stated that India had nothing to fear from his decision and tried to assure that Pakistan was determined to persevere in the path of normalizing relations with India as charted out in the Simla Accord of 1972. He also retorted that India's armed forces were many times bigger than Pakistan's.

Studying the question objectively, I could not help feeling that our reaction should have been in a lower key. As Bhutto pointed out, the lifting of the embargo had only rectified the anomaly whereby an ally of the U.S. was denied the right to purchase American arms for the self-defence. Pakistan was purchasing arms from several other countries and we could not possibly take exception only to American sales of arms to Pakistan whatever the past history of American military assistance. This time Pakistan was not being given American military assistance freely but had to pay for the purchases in cash. As the Pakistan Ambassador in Washington, General Yakub Khan, pointed

out, all that had been done by the U.S. Government was to remove discrimination against Pakistan buying weapons in America.

This question of the purchase of arms by India or Pakistan and the resultant strong protests by the other was to remain a constant feature of our adversarial relationship. I could not see how Pakistan could stop India purchasing arms for her self-defence from any source that was available to her nor could India place a veto on Pakistan purchasing arms from any country. True, this often led to an arms race between the two countries but that could not be stopped by our protesting to foreign Governments. The answer lay in the two countries overcoming the barriers of distrust, suspicion and hostility and arriving at a mutual understanding for reduction of arms keeping in view each other's security requirements.

Good Intentions Lead to Serious Personal Embarrassment

In the aftermath of Henry Kissinger's visit and various agreements that we had signed, I felt I should make some special gestures to Ambassador-Designate William Saxby to show our desire to forget the past differences and to build up a more friendly relationship with the United States. The first step I took was in regard to conveying our agreement to the appointment of the Ambassador-Designate. One morning in the first week of January, the American Charge d'Affaires, David Schneider came to see me and gave me a formal note requesting the Government of India's approval to the appointment of William B. Saxby as the next U.S. Ambassador to India. I promised to bring the request of the State Department to the notice of my Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister and to let him know in due course. Usually the agreement about an Ambassador-Designate takes four to six weeks due to correspondence between the Foreign Office and the Embassy concerned and also for various official formalities between the Foreign Office, the Prime Minister's Secretariat and the President's office.

I got it into my head to show special consideration in this case and try to get the necessary approval to Saxby's appointment within a couple of days. The same morning there was a reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan where the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Ministers and the Diplomatic Corps were present. There, I approached the Prime Minister and mentioned to her about the request received from the State Department about Saxby's proposed appointment. I suggested to her that, since our own Ambassador in Washington had already spoken highly of Saxby and, also, as the Ambassador-Designate had held a high position in Nixon's Administration as Attorney General, it would

be a fitting gesture if I could convey the Government of India's approval to his appointment within a day or two. Mrs. Gandhi was kind enough to appreciate my reasoning and conveyed her approval. She agreed to my verbally seeking the concurrence of the President also. A few minutes later, I was talking to President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, who also was gracious enough to agree with my proposal. I was thus authorized the same morning to convey the agreement of the Government of India to the American Embassy straightaway.

When Davis Schneider saw me that afternoon at my request, I conveyed to him the approval of my Prime Minister and President to Saxby's appointment. He was somewhat taken aback at this unusual promptness, but was highly appreciative of this very unusual gesture by our Prime Minister and promised to convey our approval telegraphically to the State Department.

That was the first step I took but I did not stop at that. I was rash enough to seek approval of the President for another proposal. This related to the presentation of Letters of Credence by the Ambassador-Designate of America. We were informed by the American Embassy that Saxby would be arriving on February 26. Normally, the presentation of Letters of Credence to the Head of State takes three to four weeks, if not longer, after the arrival of the new Ambassador. Here again, I suggested to our President if he could, as a very special gesture, and at his convenience, agree to receive Saxby two days after his arrival when he could present his Letters of Credence with the usual solemn ceremonies. The Ambassador, I explained, could, in this way, start functioning officially immediately on arrival. The President was again extremely kind and agreed to my proposal placing confidence in my good judgement which, however, turned out to be quite imprudent.

In the third week of February, Saxby was on his way to New Delhi via Los Angeles, Tokyo and Bangkok. Then on February 24, came the sudden announcement of the U.S. Government to start the supply of military hardware to Pakistan. All political parties condemned the decision of the U.S. Administration and there were strong attacks against the U.S. decision in the Indian press. The Foreign Minister, Y.B. Chavan, who was scheduled to leave for Washington in the middle of March for the Indo-U.S. Commission meeting called off his visit.

Saxby was already in Bangkok on his way to India when he started getting lengthy dispatches from the Embassy in New Delhi conveying the highly critical reaction of the Indian Government, the press and the political parties to the U.S. decision. With such a charged atmosphere

in New Delhi and in India generally, he wisely decided to mark time in Bangkok and to postpone his arrival till the storm had blown over.

I had to cancel hurriedly all arrangements for the Ambassador-Designate's reception and for the ceremonies that had to take place at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

I could never understand why the State Department did not display elementary common sense in not making the announcement to coincide precisely with the date of the arrival of their Ambassador-Designate. They could have easily postponed the announcement by three or four weeks, allowing enough time to their new Ambassador to come and settle down in New Delhi, have some discussions and give some explanations before the decision was made public.This would also not have come in the way of the visit of our Foreign Minister who was going to meet Dr. Kissinger in Washington within a fortnight.

But so far as my personal enthusiasm in making such exceptional gestures to the Ambassador-Designate was concerned, I was certainly taken to task by a number of friends in the press who thought that the steps I had taken were highly ill advised, especially as I should have known that the U.S. Administration pays scant respect to India's susceptibilities. Happily, the Prime Minister and the President of India did not fault me for the advice I had given them and continued to appreciate that I had acted with the best of intentions. They felt that if there was a serious lapse of good judgement in this case, it was on the part of the State Department.

Talks between Two Foreign Secretaries on Air Communications and Other Matters

Indo-Pakistan relations, as mentioned earlier, had reached a low ebb during the first quarter of 1975. The speeches of the leaders and the media propaganda on various controversial issues had so poisoned the atmosphere that the time did not seem propitious for official contacts and negotiations. At the same time, I acutely felt the need for some dialogue to put an end to growing distrust and tension between the two countries and to stop the adverse propaganda against each other which was being indulged in freely.

With the approval of the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister, I issued an invitation to the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Agha Shahi, to visit New Delhi on May 17 so that we both could resume our discussions on the state of our relations. This was to be our first meeting after a lapse of eight months and I was glad when Agha Shahi responded promptly.

The subject which troubled me seriously was the lack of air communications between the two close neighbours. How long could we accept a situation when our international airlines had to skirt around each other's territory and travel between the two countries could only be undertaken by foreign airlines? As on the earlier occasion, I suggested to Agha Shahi that Pakistan should withdraw her case from ICAO so that we could settle our differences in resuming the air links by a bilateral understanding as laid down in the Simla Agreement. During the discussions, I found Agha Shahi more receptive and agreed to convey a mutually acceptable proposal to his Government in Islamabad. Unfortunately, his final reply was that "due to communication difficulties as a result of atmospheric disturbances" he had not been able to get the approval of his Government. I was very disappointed; nor was I convinced of the "communication difficulties." The trend of the discussions, however, had been marked with frankness and warmth and we agreed to meet again to resume these talks.

Since we both were keen to carry forward the implementation of the Simla Agreement in a spirit of mutual accommodation and goodwill, we availed of this opportunity to review various other aspects of our relations, especially since the signing of the agreements in September 1974. We were able to discuss various matters in a friendly spirit and agreed to continue our efforts to improve relations.

One point on which the Indian side was anxious to satisfy the Government of Pakistan related to the Salal Hydroelectric plant on the river Chenab in India. We could appreciate Pakistan's anxiety that the design of our hydroelectric project might affect the uninterrupted flow of water to Pakistan. We both agreed that the two Indus Commissioners should meet and make sure that the design of the plant was in conformity with the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty. In case they failed to agree, they were to report the matter again to us so that a fresh decision could be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of 1960.

With the recent background of strained relations, I felt it was particularly important during our discussions to reaffirm the Simla decision of the two Governments to put an end to hostile propaganda in each country. We both agreed that our Governments should take firm steps to curb all forms of adverse propaganda against each other and we decided to remain in contact with each other in this matter.

With the approval of Prime Minister Gandhi, I again conveyed India's willingness to enter into a non-aggression treaty with Pakistan or to consider any other security arrangements to allay Pakistan's

apprehensions about the use of India's nuclear capability for purposes other than peaceful. We felt that this reiteration of our position about the use of nuclear technology and our offer to sign a non-aggression treaty was necessary to reassure Pakistan so that this could put an end to the harsh speeches of their leaders and hostile propaganda in the press.

After this meeting, there was again no movement forward. The inordinately slow pace of normalization and implementation of the Simla Agreement was illustrated by the fact that it took nearly ten months before further contacts could be established. On March 27, 1976, Prime Minister Bhutto took the initiative and wrote to the Indian Prime Minister informing her that Pakistan was willing to withdraw her case from ICAO so that bilateral negotiations could be resumed. Mrs. Gandhi welcomed this communication and suggested early talks between the two Foreign Secretaries to arrive at an agreement on the resumption of air services, rail and road links and restoration of diplomatic ties. The two Foreign Secretaries assisted by the representatives of the Ministries of Civil Aviation, Finance, Home Affairs, Railways, Shipping, Transport and Commerce met in Islamabad between May 12 and 14, 1976. They were able to arrive at the agreement for resumption of air links and overflights and after discussion of the modality for withdrawing the claims and counter-claims pending before the ICAO Council, decided to send a joint letter to the Council withdrawing the cases. Additional agreements were reached to resume goods and passenger rail traffic which would also facilitate trade between the two countries. The road traffic was also opened for the movement of people and goods.

The two countries did not as yet have diplomatic relations and had to communicate with each other through the Swiss Embassy. In this meeting, it was agreed to establish diplomatic relations immediately at the Ambassadorial level and the Governments also committed themselves to adhere to the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations so that the Missions received all facilities and courtesies for their personnel. Equally desirable, I felt, was to have arrangements for promoting cultural and scientific exchanges as envisaged in the Simla Agreement. These discussions were, however, postponed to a later date.

It had taken more than four years after the Simla Agreement to restore air and rail links between the two countries and to resume diplomatic relations. The fact that it took so long for the two Governments to recognize and implement the logic of their

interdependence and the need for cooperative relations was a sad commentary on the implementation of the Simla Agreement.

On July 24, K.S. Bajpai, formerly our Ambassador at The Hague, presented his credentials to the Pakistan President at Islamabad and, on the same day, Syed Fida Hassan was received by our President in New Delhi. Both of them had been closely involved in Indo-Pakistan relations during the 1965 conflict. Bajpai was the Counsellor with me at the High Commission and had displayed remarkable political acumen and courage in those difficult days. Hassan was Defence Secretary and later Secretary to the President, and had made several gestures of personal kindness to me even in that tense atmosphere.

India-Pakistan Contest for the Security Council Seat

More than once in the past, Indo-Pakistan rivalry had spilled into the arena of competing vehemently for prestigious posts in international organizations, often making both countries the laughing-stock of the rest of the world and setting unedifying examples of bickering. It was with a view to avoid such undignified spectacles that I had raised this matter with President Ayub in February 1966 at Larkana and with President Yahya Khan in Islamabad in July 1969, urging that the two close neighbours with strong historical, ethnic and cultural bonds and with our people longing for goodwill and friendship, should discuss these matters in advance. I expressed the hope that soon the time would come when we would speak with one voice in international meetings after having settled in advance our differences by mutual discussions. I suggested that we should try to have prior consultations between ourselves and could agree to sharing such posts by turns so that our Ambassadors in each capital could speak with one voice and support the same candidate jointly sponsored by us. This, I said, would enhance the prestige of both countries.

Unfortunately, however, these suggestions failed to materialize as agreed policy and, to the mutual shame of both peoples, the sad episodes kept recurring.

One instance of this was our confrontation on the election of the Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth in early 1970. When the Commonwealth Secretariat invited recommendations to fill the post, we decided to nominate our Ambassador in Bern, Azim Hussain, as our candidate. A few days later, I spoke to the Pakistan High Commissioner, Sajjad Haider, aboard a flight from New Delhi to Bombay. I informed him of our decision and that we had approached

various Commonwealth Governments. I suggested to him to convey our request to his Government for its support to our candidate. I also promised that in return we would support a Pakistani candidate to a post in any international organization when approached by them. Sajjad Haider welcomed the suggestion and got a reassurance from me that we would support the Pakistani candidate for a similarly high post rather than for some minor post in an international organization, provided we could have mutual consultations beforehand. After that, I did not hear anything from him for three weeks. When I met him later at a reception, he said in reply to my query that the people in Islamabad had sent no reply to my suggestion.

A few weeks later the Pakistan Government announced that its Ambassador to Vienna, Enver Muad, was being nominated as its candidate for the Commonwealth post. Between these rival candidates, their candidate got only $2\frac{1}{2}$ votes while the Indian candidate got $22\frac{1}{2}$ votes. The split vote was by a Government which wished to express its equal preference for the candidates from both countries.

Once again, to my great distress, the General Assembly meetings of the United Nations in October 1975 found India and Pakistan in open confrontation to the chagrin of common friends of the two countries and to the satisfaction of those who would always wish to aggravate differences and tension between us.

The occasion this time was the election to the non-permanent Asian seat of the Security Council which was being vacated by Iraq at the beginning of 1976. As is well known, of the fifteen members of the Security Council, ten were non-permanent, which were elected in two groups of the General Assembly each for a term of two years. Thus, every year, five non-permanent members had to be elected on regional basis in place of those who retired after the completion of their term of two years.

For this Asian seat to be vacated by Iraq, India had announced her candidature a couple of months earlier and this had been conveyed to all the Governments, including the Government of Pakistan. Some of our Ministers and senior officials had visited a number of countries to sound the Governments and our Diplomatic Missions had also approached every Government. On the whole the response we had received was very favourable. Some of the Governments even welcomed our decision on the ground that India would be an effective spokesman of the third world on important international issues in the Security Council. Some of the countries from Africa and Latin America especially assured us that they would like India to join the Security

Council as they could count on vigorously pursuing the objective of the New Economic Order. In this situation, somewhat suddenly, Pakistan also announced her candidature for this Security Council seat. To me it came as a shock as after the Simla Agreement of 1972 and with various steps having been taken to improve our relations, it was hoped that any such confrontation would be avoided by bilateral discussions. Besides, we had a strong reason to feel unhappy at Pakistan's decision to seek election for this seat as Pakistan was aware of our candidature and could have easily waited for another year when we would have supported Pakistan to the seat to be vacated by Japan in 1977.

If Pakistan had the intention to present herself as a candidate, she could have, in my view, approached us immediately on receipt of the news of India's candidature to discuss whether we could find some way of mutual accommodation so that she could also have been assured of her seat in the Security Council next year. We were left uncertain whether Pakistan herself had suddenly thought of entering the fray or whether some of the foreign powers interested in promoting tension between the two countries had encouraged her to oppose India.

I was attending the session of the General Assembly as Foreign Secretary and I took the earliest opportunity of broaching the subject with Agha Shahi, the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan.

I suggested to him that we should avoid confrontation in the General Assembly and that India would pledge support to Pakistan's candidature and would canvass for it next year in case Pakistan withdrew from the contest that year. I argued that India had put forward her candidature very much before Pakistan decided to enter the contest, and Pakistan's withdrawal, I suggested, would create a happy precedent for the future also. I requested him to get in touch with his President and place my proposal before him. Two days later, I met Agha Shahi at his request. He explained that his President was unable to agree to Pakistan's withdrawal adding that India had been a non-permanent member a couple of years earlier and could wait for some time more. I replied that it should not be a question of parity between India and Pakistan; I would have been personally very happy to agree to Pakistan's suggestion if she had announced her candidature earlier. India having approached all the Governments including the Government of Pakistan, several months earlier, it was not fair to ask us to withdraw at that stage. Since Pakistan had announced her candidature much later, it would appear more appropriate for her to withdraw on the basis of definite commitment by us to support her next year when another Asian seat would fall vacant with the retirement of Japan.

Since no mutual agreement could be arrived at, we found ourselves as rival candidates pleading for the support of the various Governments to our respective candidature. The result was a deadlock in voting. For three days this battle continued with Pakistan getting some additional votes in the second ballot with some Muslim countries shifting their votes on religious grounds and a few others giving in to the pressure of China and the two Western powers who wanted a more amenable candidate rather than India with her past record of strong support for non-aligned nations and for Afro-Asian solidarity. India had the solid support of some sixty countries and there was no chance of any of them wavering.

Seven successive ballots were taken during the four days of the stalemate, and though Pakistan by now had a lead over India, the latter's hard core supporters remained with her, and neither country could hope to get the two-thirds majority needed to win the election. The work of the General Assembly could not go on while the impasse lasted. With a view to allow deliberations between the members to find some acceptable solution, the Assembly was adjourned for forty-eight hours as, otherwise, it was quite certain that this Asian Security Council seat would remain unfilled.

A number of Ambassadors approached me and Rikhi Jaipal, our Permanent Representative, requesting that we should withdraw our candidature in the interest of the unity of the third world nations promising that they would fully support India's candidature next year when Japan would vacate the Asian seat. The Kuwait Ambassador, who was the Chairman of the Asian group, met me twice on behalf of the Asian countries. We had similar joint appeals from the delegations of the various other regions, namely South-East Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Rikhi Jaipal and I held discussions with our delegations. A couple of dissenters strongly argued that India had announced her candidature first and that there was a huge block of friendly countries who were firm in their support of India. We must not, they insisted, withdraw our candidature. If some countries had gone back on their support in the name of religion and if some powers were encouraging Indo-Pakistan rivalry, there was no reason why India should not continue to firmly adhere to her candidature. If this Asian seat remained unfilled, the blame must lie with Pakistan and some big powers which were responsible for creating the situation.

We, however, pointed out to them that it was highly undignified to continue this deadlock in the General Assembly of the United Nations. Admittedly, our position was morally unquestionable but, in the

interest of the smooth functioning of the General Assembly, it would be wise for us to withdraw. Then, again, it was strongly argued by them that the notion of parity which was being flaunted by some powers was utterly illogical. Due to their ulterior designs, these powers, they argued, would always encourage Pakistan for parity with India as we had seen over the past decades. The sole aim of these powers had been to generate conflict between Pakistan and India by insisting upon parity for the former.

It needed considerable persuasion of the delegation explaining to them that it would be more gracious of India to withdraw in favour of Pakistan when appeals had been addressed to us by almost every delegation in the General Assembly. I also added that we had to acknowledge that Pakistan was at the time leading in the votes, whatever our satisfaction of having more than sixty countries strongly supporting us. I argued with them that if our tough stand resulted in this Asian seat remaining vacant, what satisfaction could we draw from that? And, would we not be faced with the same situation next year? Such dog-in-the-manger policy was highly unbecoming and I suggested that it would be wise to gracefully put an end to this deadlock. Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal, with his tactful and gentle persuasion, was able to achieve a consensus of our delegation in favour of our withdrawal from the contest. The Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister also agreed.

The next day, Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal made a formal announcement withdrawing India's candidature. He said, "It is quite clear that the Assembly is facing a deadlock. We are concerned about it and we wish to see it resolved in a manner befitting the dignity of the Organization." He pointed out how there was no chance of either India or Pakistan getting the required two-thirds majority. As there was the danger of the Asian seat remaining vacant, the Indian delegation had decided not to press its candidature any longer.

India's announcement was received with applause by the General Assembly and leaders of various delegations in their speeches congratulated India for this gracious gesture. The Pakistan Ambassador, Iqbal Akhund, also rose up to express his country's deep appreciation of India's decision. He said the Indian decision not merely cleared the way for the uncontested election of Pakistan but also, above all, "it strengthens the unity of the Asian group." He praised the Indian gesture as "yet another element contributing to the spirit of harmony" that the two countries were trying to establish in the subcontinent. "There is no winner or loser today," he said, echoing the remarks of nine other speakers, and added that it would be Pakistan's "pleasure and duty" to back India fully at another Council election.

10

Bhutto's Regime: December 20, 1972-July 5, 1977

Domestic and Foreign Policies of Pakistan under Bhutto's Leadership

Quite a few references that I have made to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto when he was Foreign Minister during my tenure as High Commissioner of India to Pakistan in 1965-66 pertain to his intemperate outbursts against India and Hinduism, which used to distress me acutely, all the more so coming from such an aristocratic gentleman, with his high academic attainments and urbanity.

I have quoted his statements and speeches from the Pakistani press, and may not, therefore, be faulted for any personal ill-feelings. Rather, I had intuitive respect for Bhutto as during my visits to him, I was always impressed by his sophistication, warm hospitality and gift of the gab except when the subject turned to Indo-Pakistan relations. I used to think, with some envy, that Pakistan could not have had a better envoy and spokesman at any international gathering, political or social, than this winsome man. His initiative particularly in cultivating relations with China and the Soviet Union, thereby taking Pakistani foreign policy out of the straitjacket of the Western defence pacts, was bold and admirable.

After the events of 1970-71, which were cataclysmic for his country, the rough edges in his personality seemed to have been smoothed out. During my visits to Pakistan as Foreign Secretary in 1973-75, especially when negotiating the implementation of the Simla Agreement, I felt I was meeting an entirely changed man, chastened, tempered and ennobled. The impulsiveness and acrimonious speech of the past had left him. Sure of himself as the most popular leader of West Pakistan, one found in him a sagacious and gentle leader, composed and earnest even when dealing with tormenting and provocative questions like some 91,000 POWs in India and the

Bangladesh Government's decision to try some 195 of them as war criminals.

Only once in our long discussions during July 1973 did he display his old impetuosity. This was in reply to our suggestion of India sending immediately some 91,000 POWs minus 293 to be detained for the time being for trials by the Bangladesh Government. Our reasoning was that the vast majority of the POWs must return to their homes straightaway and that with train loads of them coming to Pakistan every day, the general atmosphere would improve for further negotiations. Bhutto reacted sharply and said: "You can throw all the 91,000 into the river Ganges, but I shall not agree to even one soldier being detained for war crimes." His reaction was justified. As a truly democratic leader of the nation, whose democratic aspirations were being realized for the first time, he could not agree to something which would have aroused strong indignation among his people.

While anxious to resolve the post-war problems of 1972, he was acutely conscious of his democratic accountability to the people of Pakistan and to their sensitivities. On issues like the recognition of Bangladesh, the repatriation of the prisoners of war, the trials for war crimes and the acceptance of Biharis from Bangladesh, he was prepared for delay but refused to accept any compromise which could disconcert his traumatized people.

His commitment to democracy and to the active participation of his people in the decision making as well as his concern to alleviate the socio-economic distress of the masses were convincing. In both these respects, his bold and dedicated leadership promised a new era in Pakistan.When quitting President Ayub's Cabinet in 1966 Bhutto had fervently given vent to the Pakistani people's demands for political participation and economic and social justice. Even at that early stage, one could see ever increasing popular support and admiration for him among the middle class, the students, the intellectuals and the labourers. Extraordinary had been the reception the huge crowds in Lahore, Hyderabad and Karachi accorded him as he left Islamabad for his hometown Larkana after resigning.

Ayub's position in Pakistan's body politic, with the unflinching support of the military-bureaucratic structure as well as that of the feudal landlords and the big business houses, had been unassailable, and it took more than two years for the movement launched by Bhutto to gather momentum to threaten Ayub's authority. Even so, with hindsight, one could not but wonder at Bhutto's political perspicacity in quitting at the right time Ayub's boat which he foresaw was doomed to sink.

In the following years, Bhutto had wholeheartedly identified himself with the Pakistani masses and was able to mobilize the whole nation against Ayub's autocratic military regime and his exploitative economic policies. It was for the first time in Pakistan's history that someone had promised socialism to end exploitation by the capitalists and the big landlords, and his call received enthusiastic support of the students, the intellectuals, the middle class and the urban and rural labour.

Bhutto's dynamic leadership and his impassioned rhetoric promising democracy and socialism had stirred up the masses to hold large-scale protest demonstrations in various cities. These ever-increasing protests, rallies and strikes, even in the face of military firing, finally led to the collapse of Ayub's authority.

The Pakistan People's Party was inaugurated on December 1, 1970, with Bhutto as the Chairman. The PPP's 1970 election manifesto had promised "Islamic Socialism" to the people of Pakistan, immediately winning over the masses who had all along been victims of economic exploitation and political suppression. The manifesto said:

> The ultimate objective of the party's policy is the attainment of a classless society, which is possible only through socialism in our time. This means true equality of the citizens, fraternity under the rule of democracy in an order based on economic and social justice. These aims flow from the political and social ethics of Islam. The party thus strives to put in practice the noble ideals of the Muslim faith.

Bhutto's campaign promise of "Roti, Kapra and Makaan" (Food, Shelter and Clothing) for everybody, won him the praise of the vast majority of the lower middle class, the urban and rural workers and the peasants. His party's commitment to the democratic institutions for which the people of Pakistan had been yearning for so long brought him the support and admiration of the middle class, the intellectuals. the lawyers and the professionals.

For the past fifteen years, the propaganda about the threat to Islam from Hindu India had been unremitting with the intent to promote national integration and to boost the role of the army as the saviour of the nation. This Islamic ideology was also fully exploited to suppress any dissent and to create cultural barriers against India.

For that reason, the election propaganda of 1970 was an incredible shift. For the first time, the ideology placed before the people was secular and economic i.e., democratic socialism, the juxtaposition of "Islamic" in "Islamic Socialism" being simply to make a popular appeal

to the masses. Statements were even made to the effect that the question of Islam was irrelevant to Pakistan as both the exploiters and the exploited were Muslims. As a consequence, in the 1970 elections, the electorate no longer submitted to the military regime's erstwhile propaganda of Islamic unity and threat from India. The demonstrators in all the towns expressed their resentment about the suppression of their democratic rights and bitterness about their economic plight. One could not, though, overlook that the manifesto had the usual anti-India stance which had been Bhutto's attitude over a long period. In his speeches also, he repeatedly attacked India and promised unrelenting struggle on the Kashmir issue.

During my visits to Pakistan in 1973-74, I could see how the people admired the manner in which Bhutto was proving faithful to the promises of political participation and economic justice that he had held out to his people. He had given the nation a democratic construction which was almost unanimously approved on April 10, 1973, by the members of the Constituent Assembly elected directly by the people. This was a unique achievement in the history of Pakistan for which Bhutto won the well-deserved respect of his nation. This Constitution was promulgated on August 14, 1973.

Bhutto had also been painfully aware of the dominant and pernicious role which the army and the bureaucracy had played for too long in the political and administrative affairs of the country. He started, therefore, with a determination to eliminate the possibility of their undermining the functioning of the new democratic institutions. In early 1972, he removed several seniormost officers of the defence services to emphasize the pre-eminence of the democratically elected leaders in all decision-making and expecting tacit obedience of the military officers to the civilian authority. The names of General Gul Hasan, Chief of the Army Staff, and Air Marshal Rahim Khan, Chief of the Air Staff, were particularly mentioned among those who did not appear to have been, according to Prime Minister Bhutto, fully reconciled to the civil authority. Unlike them, General Tikka Khan, who, it was believed, had always understood the strictly constitutional role of the army under the directions of the political leadership, was appointed as Chief of the Army Staff.

By his White Paper of 1976, Bhutto effected some fundamental structural changes in the higher command of the armed forces bringing all major decision-making under the Prime Minister's direct authority. The Prime Minister, under this new system, was the Chairman of the Defence Council as well as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. All this gave a clear message to the Defence Services that

after twenty years of military domination of the national administration, their role henceforth must be strictly limited to their constitutional duties for the defence of the country under the orders of the political leadership.

The stranglehold of the bureaucracy over the economic and administrative decisions had also to be removed as they were playing a disproportionately powerful and, at times, an arbitrary role. Under a democratic system, they had to be made obedient to the decisions and directions of the political leadership. Bhutto started by retiring nearly 1,800 civil servants from the Central and the Provincial Governments to improve the efficiency and discipline of the bureaucracy. Later, the administrative reforms of August 1973 reorganized the whole administrative structure, greatly reduced the prerogatives and powers of the Pakistan civil service and even provided for direct entry to the service by other professionals.

During the election campaign, the PPP had specially promised the nationalization of all basic industries and financial institutions and other programmes for the economic welfare of the people. Within two months of coming into power he had nationalized the ten categories of industries which had been previously monopolized by big industrial houses. Among them were insurance companies and banking institutions. In addition, thirty-one major industrial concerns were taken over by a Board of Industrial Management set up by the Government which also acquired the majority shares in eighteen other companies by promulgating an ordinance.

Equally drastic were the land reforms introduced to help the poor peasants and the rural labour. The ceilings on land which an individual could hold were reduced from 1,000 to 300 acres for unirrigated land. The rest of the land was to be taken over and distributed to the poor peasants. A number of other measures were undertaken to promote the welfare of the workers and the poorer sections of society.

A very important policy decision taken by Bhutto was to devalue the rupee, which had not been done since 1949. This devaluation by more than 56 per cent gave a boost to the agro-allied industries which could now face the international competition and export on a much larger scale. In consequence, the growth rate shot up during 1972-74 bringing prosperity to the agriculturists who had been ignored in Ayub's days when the emphasis was on helping the new industrial class.

The Bhutto Government also initiated major programmes for spreading education and improving health facilities for the masses.

During my visits in 1973-74, the people I met were greatly appreciative of the Bhutto regime for giving them parliamentary constitution, evolving democratic political institutions and promoting economic and social welfare of the masses. There was also great praise for his conduct of Pakistan's foreign policy. He had been successful in further strengthening Pakistan's relations with China and the Middle Eastern States including Iran and Turkey. Pakistan could be very happy with the friendly relations with the Soviet Union and Afghanistan and the much closer relations with Indonesia and Sri Lanka. With India relations were being normalized and a dialogue with Bandladesh had started after her recognition by the Pakistan Government. Bhutto was even able, to our distress, to prevail upon the U.S. Government to resume the supply of arms to Pakistan which had been suspended for the past ten years. He insisted that Pakistan had a right to get arms from the USA in accordance with the bilateral agreements of 1954 and 1959 and complained that Pakistan was the only ally which was not being supplied any arms by the United States. It was on February 24, 1975, that the Ford Administration announce its decision to resume the supply of arms.

Kashmir Issue and Bhutto's Policy

Some developments relating to Kashmir at the end of 1974 and the beginning of 1975 again adversely affected the relations between India and Pakistan leading to protests and counter protests by the two Governments.

Since 1972, I had been keen to understand Bhutto's personal policy stance vis-a-vis the state of Jammu and Kashmir. We were well aware of the PPP's election manifesto of 1970, promising unrelenting struggle against India to achieve the self-determination for the people of Kashmir. His speeches were as violently anti-Indian as I had seen in 1965 and 1966. Nevertheless, some statements of Bhutto since April 1972 seemed to suggest that the trauma of Pakistan's disintegration and its grave strategic, political and economic consequences may have moderated his belligerent attitude towards India on this matter. One, therefore, hoped that the Kashmir issue would not be frequently raked up by him as had been done by the previous leaders to incite the people of Pakistan against India mainly for their domestic reasons.

The first statement of Bhutto which had encouraged me was what he had said in 1972 in an interview with Dilip Mukerjee, one of India's prominent journalists. Mukerjee had seen Bhutto at his family residence at Larkana on March 14, 1972, where he was specially flown from

Karachi. Bhutto was reported to have told him that it was not for Pakistan to secure the right of self-determination for the Kashmiris; it was up to them to fight for it if they wanted a different future. This was a broad hint that Pakistan was disengaging herself from her usual proclivity to interpose in and to raise a clamour about the Kashmir state on the slightest pretext. He further added that "just as a revolution cannot be exported, the basic struggle for self-determination cannot be inspired from outside." Reading this report in Bonn, I was greatly impressed with the new realism which this democratically elected leader of Pakistan was showing on the Kashmir question.

The Simla Agreement also, as I have already pointed out, laid down the new boundary in the state of Jammu and Kashmir to be the "Line of Actual Control" and not the cease-fire line. No longer was there to be the concept of a cease-fire line supervised by international observers. It was a bilaterally agreed boundary to be respected by both sides. The agreement also made a specific provision against the use of force to alter the line of control.

Admittedly, to meet Pakistan's sensitivities in the anguished circumstances in which the negotiations were taking place, the agreement stated that the "line of control" would be respected by both sides "without prejudice to the recognized position of either side." But in any efforts for a future solution, the firm commitments by the two Governments to bilateralism and to abjure the use of force had to be the fundamental prerequisites. In plain language, the agreement meant that unless the two Governments mutually agreed to change the status, the line of actual control would be the frontier between the two countries. All this could not but indicate the eventual possibility of accepting the status quo.

The general consensus in regard to the ratification of the Simla Agreement in the Pakistan National Assembly including the support of the opposition parties on July 15, 1972, was also a heartening sign. Not only Prime Minister Bhutto and the leaders of the PPP supported it but also the leaders of NAP and JUI. One could, perhaps, hope that the continuous agitation on the Kashmir issue would gradually wind down.

Of course, I could not be unmindful of the fact that, in the speeches in the Assembly, the position remained committed to support the Kashmiris' right for self-determination. Even Bhutto had to say that, if the people of Kashmir started a freedom movement, the Pakistanis would be with them, no matter what the consequences. His Finance Minister had said: "We do not accept the cease-fire line as the international boundary." All the same, one was inclined to construe that

these and later such statements could be attributed to the anxiety of Pakistan's leadership to mollify the opposition to gain their support for the Simla Agreement.

Bhutto's intentions about the possible integration of the POK (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) with Pakistan were also becoming clearer by the end of 1973. During his tour of this region, he offered to the local leaders the possibility of POK (Azad Kashmir as they called it) becoming a province of Pakistan with representation in the National Assembly. This was followed by the constitutional changes in June 1974, which brought the POK administration more under the direct authority of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. We knew that further steps were contemplated by Bhutto to fully integrate POK with Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the state of Hunza which was previously an autonomous principality in POK was annexed by the Pakistan Government about which India lodged a strong protest. We alleged that Pakistan had by her unilateral action changed the situation in a territory that was a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir which had acceded to India.

The Pakistan Government reacted even more vehemently in February 1975 to the accord reached between Sheikh Abdullah and the Government of India relating to some changes in the constitutional relationship between the state and the Indian Union. As a result of this accord, the Congress party Chief Minister had resigned and Sheikh Abdullah, though not a member of the Congress party, had been unanimously elected as Chief Minister of the state of Kashmir on February 24, 1975.

To protest against the accord, Prime Minister Bhutto called for *hartal* and a general strike all over Pakistan as well as in the state of Kashmir where there was, however, little response except for some minor clashes. The Pakistan Government strongly remonstrated that India had no right to bring about any changes in the state of Jammu and Kashmir contending that its constitutional position was under dispute with the Pakistan Government. India protested that Bhutto's appeal for strikes and propaganda against India was gross interference in India's internal affairs.

Throughout the week, there was venomous propaganda against India all over Pakistan both in the press and through the speeches of the leaders. The Government of India also reacted sharply, with similar hostile propaganda against Pakistan. All this was having a highly deleterious effect on the minds of the peoples of India and Pakistan and on the prospects of further steps to improve relations between the two countries. Bhutto's incitement to agitation on this occasion was quite in

line with the policy of the previous leaders. He went all out to rake up the Kashmir issue internationally for ulterior motives.

I approved a statement which the External Affairs Ministry issued regretting Prime Minister Bhutto's statements and the call for strike at a time when the prospects of normalization of relations between India and Pakistan had shown positive signs of improvement. Perhaps uncharitably, some people in our Ministry felt that all this propaganda in Pakistan had a deliberate design. The aim, they argued, was to put pressure on the U.S. Government to supply arms to Pakistan to which the former had been readily amenable. By a strange coincidence, the State Department announced the uplifting of embargo on the supply of arms to Pakistan on the same day that Sheikh Abdullah was being sworn in as the Chief Minister of the State of Kashmir.

Pakistan's call for a general strike in Pakistan and Kashmir also evoked a strong retort from Sheikh Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Kashmir. During the course of a prayer meeting on February 28, he said that Pakistan could not play with the future of Jammu and Kashmir after having committed atrocities in the occupied area of Kashmir and having launched an orgy of violence against the people of the state in 1947. He also accused Pakistan of trampling upon the legitimate democratic aspirations of the people in the so-called Azad Kashmir.

Referring to the historical background, he said that the state became a part of India in 1947. This was a voluntary decision taken by the people when they were faced with the Pakistani raids. The unilateral action of Pakistan had left the people with no choice but to join India. "I myself was a member of the Constituent Assembly," he asserted.

Such simulated outbursts of protests on Kashmir by India and Pakistan were exercises in futility but both sides had to do so for the sake of record on the basis of their respective formal and legal positions. Otherwise, it was abundantly clear to each side that it had no means to stop any political or constitutional developments in the other part of Kashmir. If the state of Jammu and Kashmir had constitutionally become a part of the Indian Union, POK (or Azad Kashmir as they called it) was certainly a part of Pakistan.

In May 1975, the PPP in alliance with three other parties in POK won the elections by what the opposition leaders bitterly complained as foul means. The PPP nominated its new President dislodging the previous Government headed by Sardar Abdul Qaiyum Khan, leader of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. By the end of June, further constitutional changes took place by which POK adopted the parliamentary system of Government and the leader of the PPP in POK became the first Prime Minister. With all the foregoing actions, POK

was fully integrated with Pakistan and the PPP's domination was established.

Some in Pakistan felt that the integration of POK, as already envisaged by Bhutto since 1973, was facilitated by the accord between New Delhi and Sheikh Abdullah. He could now argue with his people that the accord had left him no choice but to accept the realities and finally integrate POK with Pakistan.

There were voices in Pakistan warning against the damaging effect of the POK integration on the solution of the disputed state of Kashmir through bilateral negotiations in accordance with the provisions of the Simla Agreement. Bhutto, on the other hand, appeared to have been aiming at a status quo solution which, I had always felt, was the only rational approach for the two Governments. How could the Pakistani side now talk of the territory being in dispute while making it an integral part of the State of Pakistan?

For that very reason, the leaders of the opposition had been highly critical of Bhutto's policies and actions with regard to POK. At a United Democratic Front meeting, the leaders expressed strong opposition to "the line of actual control" assuming a permanent character as that would be betrayal of the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris. Quite cogently, the JUI leader, Maulana Mufti Mahmud, had even questioned how the PPP could operate in Azad Kashmir (POK) which was a disputed territory as part of the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir. For the same reasons, he criticized Bhutto's merging of "Azad Kashmir" with Pakistan.

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From the Ministry of External Affairs to Washington as Ambassador

Prospects of Indo-Pakistan Relations

When leaving for Washington in the middle of 1976, I was inclined to be optimistic about the future of Indo-Pakistan relations on the basis of the positive developments that had taken place during the past three years after the war of 1971 and the signing of the Simla Agreement in July 1972. The enormous post-war problems such as the withdrawal of troops, the vacation of territories, the return of the 91,000 POWs and the issue of war trials, etc., had been resolved in a spirit of reconciliation. Despite delays and difficulties, the process of normalization of relations between the two countries had made good progress. The travel facilities, even if somewhat limited, and visits to religious places between the two countries had established some contacts and communications between the two peoples. Of great importance was the resumption of telecommunications and postal links, railway travel, trade and banking facilities between India and Pakistan. The latest agreements were on the restoration of overflights and the re-establishment of diplomatic relations.

Pakistan was more than satisfied with the various agreements as Prime Minister Bhutto could claim to have resolved with dignity, thanks to the understanding of India and Bangladesh, the humiliating situation left over by the oppressive policies and adventurism of the military dictators. The people of Pakistan were very happy at the restoration of communications and commercial possibilities after such a long disruption.

Notwithstanding the previous bitter disappointments, we hoped that from then onwards there could be increasing mutual trust and more fruitful cooperation in the economic, commercial and industrial areas and such greater exchanges in the educational and cultural fields. The process, we realized, would be slow, but with the first ever truly

democratic regime professing to serve the wishes of the people of Pakistan, strong ties of good understanding and cooperation could be gradually forged by the freer movement of the peoples and the exchange of newspapers and information. The cultural and information barriers erected by the authoritarian regimes had to be pulled down. The arrangements agreed upon so far were the first steps in that direction.

Political Scene in Pakistan and Reports of Decline of Bhutto's Popularity

In regard to the situation within Pakistan, my overall assessment was quite favourable although I was already receiving some foreboding signals. The foundation of the democratic system seemed firm and I was still carried away with the impressions of Government policies having greatly improved the economic conditions of the masses in the towns and the villages and having also provided them better health, educational and housing facilities.

In every respect, when leaving for Washington, I felt that the circumstances were propitious for democratic socialism in Pakistan and for goodwill between India and Pakistan. One did receive some portentous signals from Pakistan, both from the political and economic fronts which I was inclined to underestimate having been too impressed with Bhutto's political shrewdness, his mass appeal, his bold imaginative policies in bringing about democratic institutions and economic reforms.

The critics talked of growing dissatisfaction with his economic plans and attributed it to a marked shift in his policies by the end of 1974. The socialist programmes so far pursued were being reversed starting with the removal of the Socialist leaders from his Government and from the party. It was they, especially Mubashir Hassan and J.A. Rahim, who had been the driving force behind the economic programmes so welcomed by the common people. It was becoming clear that Bhutto was going back on socialism to broaden his constituency by including the landlords, the big business and the upper classes and their interests were again being encouraged and supported. The reports also confirmed that, as a result of changes in policy, the farmers, the labourers and the industrial workers who had placed faith in Bhutto, were getting disillusioned, with the rising prices making their economic condition precarious. The people were now discovering that big business had not been unduly worried about Bhutto's socialistic rhetoric as the measures adopted for nationalization and

socialization were only halfhearted, being neither comprehensive nor radical. Disillusioned by his latest economic policies, the urban and rural middle class, who had been his enthusiastic supporters in the early 1970s, were now becoming antagonistic to him.

Along with Bhutto's keenness to win over the support of the big landlords and the industrialists came, curiously, his efforts to appeal to the Islamic sentiments of the people—a marked departure from the secular and socialist ideals he had stressed during the 1970 election campaign.

Three major events were organized in 1976 to project the regime's fervour for the Islamic faith and its solidarity with the Muslim world. The first was the Islamic Summit in early 1976 which was attended by the various Heads of Arab States.

The occasion was used to publicize the prestige enjoyed by Bhutto's policies in the Muslim World. Soon thereafter invitations were sent to the Imams of the two holiest places of Islam, Kaba and Medina. These religious dignitaries visited several cities and held prayer meetings which was an occasion of great joy to the faithful. This was followed by an International Conference on the life and teachings of Prophet Mohammad.

Apart from the criticism of Bhutto's shift in economic policies, even more severe accusations were levelled against him for his handling of the political affairs and general administrative problems. A number of visitors from Pakistan whom I met used to speak of his intolerance of any opposition to him whether by the leaders of the other parties or by those in the PPP. They said that he could be very vindictive towards his political opponents, having little respect for the democratic principles, and attributed all sorts of political victimization to him. A senior diplomat who had a number of friends in Pakistan came back with the unhappy impression that people thought Bhutto would resort to any means against his political enemies to humiliate them. Even if these views were exaggerated, one could not but conclude that there was considerable disenchantment in Pakistan with a leader who had been their saviour from military dictatorship and economic exploitation.

So far as democratic freedoms were concerned, a free press had ceased to function; any press criticism led to the arrest of the press representatives or a raid on their premises. The authority of the judiciary had also been seriously undermined by the amendments to the Constitution with the result that individual rights could not be protected against the excesses by the executive.

From all accounts it appeared that Bhutto, who had done so much to set up democratic institutions did not personally have a democratic

temperament. He was extremely intolerant of any dissent and could be implacably hostile towards those who expressed opinions contrary to his own. In his decisions, he could be arbitrary and coercive, flouting democratic principles and conventions, to the distress of his colleagues and senior functionaries.

His autocratic temperament and his intolerance of any opposition even from his own party and his vindictiveness towards his opponents were earning him hostility of some sections of the population. Those reports confirmed that his legitimacy was being fast eroded.

The arbitrary manner in which he toppled the opposition Governments in Baluchistan and NWFP showed his lack of respect for democratic principles. In both those provinces, the PPP had miserably failed in the 1970 elections securing no seat in the 20-member Provincial Assembly of Baluchistan and only four seats in the 40-member Provincial Assembly in NWFP. Yet both these Governments were overthrown and PPP Governments were installed by securing PPP majority using various unfair means including bribery, blackmail and arrests.

Similarly in POK "Azad Kashmir", a PPP Government was imposed although it had no support whatsoever in the earlier years. President Yahya Khan had laid down that non-Kashmiri parties were banned in this area and hence the PPP could not operate there in the 1970 elections, but Bhutto was determined, as in the case of NWFP and Baluchistan, to install a PPP Government in Azad Kashmir. This would have been inconsistent as this area had an autonomous status internally and Pakistan had considered it a part of "disputed territory." Already in 1973, Bhutto had offered the people of Azad Kashmir to become a province of Pakistan. The idea was to integrate it fully with Pakistan and to abolish its separate character. By holding fresh elections, PPP majority was secured defeating the existing Government of Muslim Conference of Azad Kashmir.

General Elections of March 1977 and their Aftermath

On January 7, 1977, we read the news of Bhutto's announcement about the general elections in Pakistan. The date fixed for elections to the National Assembly was March 7 and for the Provincial Assembly, March 10. In fixing the election schedule, Bhutto was abiding by the provisions of the Constitution.

As an interesting coincidence, ten days later we got intimation of the decision of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to hold

national elections to seek a mandate of the nation after a year and a half of the state of emergency.

It was generally believed that Bhutto would win the elections because of the part he had played in building up democratic institutions for his nation and in implementing economic and social reforms. Additionally, the opposition parties were badly divided and there was no opposition leader strong enough to challenge Bhutto. His foreign policies also, from the point of view of Pakistan's national interest, had been quite successful.

As regards the Indian elections, there was a great deal of interest in America. I recalled President Ford once describing the state of emergency in India as the "demise of democracy." Naturally, there was great curiosity as to how the Indian electorate was going to vote and how the Congress party would react to the national verdict.

Just before the elections, Bhutto made some further concessions to the peasants and to the labouring classes. He announced an Eight Point National Charter for peasants promising distribution of land to those peasants who did not own any land, with full ownership rights. Two weeks later, he announced further land reforms, still lowering the ceilings which an individual could own. For the labourers and the Government employees, he introduced higher basic pay, social security benefits, shares in profits and housing facilities. Finally, he replaced the old revenue system in vogue since the pre-British days by introducing an agricultural income-tax system. All these concessions on the eve of the elections were aimed at winning back the support of these weaker sections of society.

As against these positive measures, there were also reports that, just before the elections, Bhutto had resorted to getting some constitutional amendments passed by the National Assembly which limited the powers of the judiciary and debarred the leaders of the defunct NAP from participating in the general elections. Obviously, all this was done to ensure the PPP's victory in the elections.

From the point of view of the actual election contest, a spectacular development took place when the nine opposition parties joined together to form the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). The election could no more be a walk-over for the PPP with the possibility of tough competition in some constituencies but on the whole the prospects for the PPP remained bright.

The opposition parties' complaints during the elections were that while the PPP election manifesto and Bhutto's speeches got maximum publicity through the official media and by the Government machinery, the opposition leaders could rely only on brief reports in the

newspapers. At the same time, the freedom of the press had been severely curtailed.

As the results of the National Assembly elections were announced on March 8, even the most optimistic forecasts for the PPP were surpassed, when it won 185 out of the total 200 seats. What one found even more surprising was that not only the Prime Minister but also the PPP Chief Ministers of all the four provinces were declared as elected unopposed. This appeared odd as normally in free democratic elections, the opposition puts up candidates against the Prime Minister and other top leaders even if such candidates receive only meagre votes. A number of other PPP members were also elected without any contest. In any case, it seemed obvious that the people had reaffirmed their confidence in the PPP.

Within two days, the press reports from Islamabad brought news of strong protests by the opposition leaders, accusing the Government of resorting to high-handed actions including illegal acts and criminal offences against the opposition candidates with the aim of rigging the elections. They announced their decision to boycott the elections to the Provincial Assemblies.

The main complaints of the PNA were that the opposition candidates and their supporters had been assaulterd and in some cases kidnapped or arrested by the police and the PNA agents had been terrorized. They also pointed out how at a number of places the polling booths had been attacked and the ballot boxes tampered with by putting in pro-PPP ballot papers. Many instances were cited when the election victory of the PPP candidates was announced even before the votes were counted. The PNA propaganda alleged that almost every norm of fair elections had been violated with impunity and before the eyes of the public. These allegations were getting confirmed by the impartial observers and the non-partisan press.

The PNA demanded that fresh general elections should be held under the supervision of the army and the judiciary. Some offers of accommodation by Bhutto, e.g., by conceding some additional seats to the PNA in the National Assembly were rejected by the opposition leaders and they boycotted the March 25 session of the National Assembly.

Close observers of the recent developments in Pakistan wondered why the PPP leaders had to use the administrative machinery to interfere with the elections so blatantly when there could be little doubt that the party would have, in any case, won with a substantial majority. Their judgement was based on the popularity which the PPP still enjoyed with the vast majority of the people because of the democratic

national elections to seek a mandate of the nation after a year and a half of the state of emergency.

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institutions and administrative and economic reforms that Bhutto's policies had been able to offer to the people apart from his successful pursuit of Pakistan's international relations. Was it worth showing an overwhelming victory of 80 to 90 per cent votes by high-handed acts and rigging of elections rather than accepting 50 to 60 per cent majority by fair elections? The explanation generally given was that all this had been due to Bhutto's temperamental caprices and haughtiness of personal power which led to the use of the official machinery to interfere preposterously with the election procedures.

The PNA had launched agitation against the regime which was spreading all over the country. To deal sternly with the situation, Bhutto arrested the opposition leaders and called in the army to suppress the demonstrations which was followed up with the imposition of curfew and Martial Law. These repressive actions intensified the revolt against the regime. Bhutto, the founder of democracy in Pakistan was fast losing the respect of her people, and the PNA not only demanded elections but also his resignation.

The popular uprising and the assaults and firing by the police aggravated the political turmoil. During the month of March, there were widespread protest rallies and violent clashes between the army and the demonstrators.

These scenes were reminiscent of the last days of President Ayub to which Bhutto had been an eyewitness day after day. In fact, it was his inspiration that had raised the popular revolt against Ayub in the name of democracy and social justice. Ironically, he himself had failed to learn the lesson and was being driven to the wall by the popular uprising in the same manner and with the same slogans.

The simultaneous reports of the general elections in India showed that, notwithstanding the background of authoritarian administration during the past year and a half of the state of emergency, the polling was fair and free from any interference of harassment by the officials or the politicians. The results of the elections came as a big surprise as it was a shattering defeat for the Congress party which had had an uninterrupted record of glorious services to the nation since 1947. The last elections had given the party an overwhelming majority and the prestige of Prime Minister Gandhi had been at its height for her dynamic socialist policies and her brilliant handling of international challenges and threats forced upon India during the past years.

The reason for the rejection of the party was the popular resentment at the imposition of emergency rule even though it was voted by the two-thirds majority of Parliament and had been justified by the

exigencies of national stability. The people just protested why their democratic rights had been violated.

The democratic way in which the power was peacefully transferred to the new party which had won the elections raised India's prestige very high internationally. People praised Mrs. Gandhi as a great leader of a great nation who had respected the verdict of her people and had gracefully bowed out of power. This was in stark contrast to what was happening in Pakistan.

In Pakistan, as the popular revolt and the prevailing bitterness and violence could not be crushed by the use of brutal force, Bhutto tried for conciliation with the PNA leaders. He released all the opposition leaders and started negotiations with them. As a result of these discussions, an agreement was reached by which Bhutto promised to hold fresh elections under the supervision of the army and the judiciary. A two-member committee, one from the PPP and the other from the PNA, was set up to spell out the basic issues of the agreement. An additional condition laid down by the PNA was that there should be a Joint Implementation Council with the representatives of both sides to supervise the elections. They insisted upon this with a view to ensure that Bhutto and his party-men and the administration did not interfere with the elections as in the past.

Bhutto, on his return from the West Asia tour, tried to arbitrarily change the proposals of the two-member committee, which was resented by the PNA leaders. The modified proposals were rejected by the PNA Central Council which led to the collapse of the negotiations. The atmosphere had again become very tense and there were grave fears of violence breaking out with armed clashes between PPP supporters and members of the PNA, who had the sympathy of the general public.

With the threat of civil war breaking out all over the country, the Chief of the Army Staff, General Zia-ul-Haq took over the Government by a military coup on the morning of July 5. The Government of Bhutto was dismissed, Martial Law was imposed and the national and provincial assemblies were dissolved. All the prominent leaders of the two political parties were taken under custody.

General Zia-ul-Haq explained in a nationwide broadcast that there had been no chance of a compromise between the PPP and the PNA "because of their mutual distrust and lack of faith." Their confrontation, he said, "would throw the country into chaos and the country would thus be plunged into a more serious crisis. This risk could not be taken. The army had, therefore, to act."

It was a great tragedy for the people of Pakistan that the high hopes of democracy and socialism that had been raised by Bhutto after nearly twenty-five years of dictatorships and economic exploitation of the masses were blighted within a couple of years. Bhutto, who inspired these hopes, had himself failed to abide by democratic rules and disciplines. He did lay the foundation of democratic institutions but by his personal behaviour saw to it that the institutions were bereft of democratic principles, practices and conventions.

Pakistan once more came under the dictatorial military rule with no political parties and with no freedom of the press or guarantees of individual rights. Although General Zia-ul-Haq had announced that fresh elections would take place on October 18, 1977, one could hardly place any confidence in this promise. Military dictators, once having assumed power seldom surrender it voluntarily, and they become more and more autocratic and ruthless with the passage of time. That the people of Pakistan were destined to suffer this fate was borne out in the following years.

Concluding Reflections

The foregoing narrative of the three decades of Indo-Pakistan relations ends rather abruptly with 1977 after I relinquished my official position as Ambassador in Washington. The excuse could be that the memoirs of an Ambassador must end with his retirement. But this is untenable for two reasons. The author, having left the arena of active participation after thirty years, must seriously reflect from a detached position over some of the causes and effects of the violent upheavals that accompanied the partition of India and the subsequent confrontations and conflicts to which he had been a sorrowful witness. Secondly, even though briefly, the state of India-Pakistan relations must be updated since 1977 before the manuscript goes to press.

Wandering back into memory lane, many poignant scenes haunt my mind and several questions call for further deliberation. Was the partition of the country at all desirable or inevitable? Why did a country, with millennia old civilization and proud heritage of so many races, religions, philosophies and cultures living in peace and harmony have to be torn asunder? At the final stage, the responsibility for the realization of India's independence lay with the British Government, and with the Congress and Muslim League leaders. What sinister designs, ambitions, misjudgements and obstinate attitude of the different parties inexorably led to the demolition of the magnificent structure of national unity?

The British, whom we had always blamed for our political subjugation and exploitation of communal differences had gone and the partition of India had, after all, been brought about by mutual agreement between the national leaders of different political parties. What bitter legacies and misperceptions and what national compulsions and international intrusions were responsible since 1947 for the persistent distrust and hostility and three wars between the two sister nations?

Even as late as 1945, one could see no popular support for the division of the country on a religious basis. The general elections of 1937 were a firm rejection of the Muslim League party, and the

Pakistan Resolution of 1940 was, as I have explained, severely criticized at that time by most Muslim leaders of India.

As an administrator in Muslim-majority districts in the West Punjab in 1944-46, I never saw any signs of communal tension, much less the demand for a separate Muslim homeland. The Unionist party, with an overwhelming majority including the representatives of all the three communities, Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs, was most popular with its secular outlook and its emphasis on economic progress of the rural population. And this was the region which in 1947 was to become the heartland of Pakistan.

What happened between 1945 and 1947 that Pakistan, which in 1940 was termed as "absurd and chimerical" by many Muslim leaders including the Muslim Premiers of Punjab, Sindh and North-West Frontier Provinces emerged as a sovereign independent State with its firm base in these very provinces? It was again in these provinces that I had been a personal witness to Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs living in communal amity and cooperation till the well-organized massacres in the West Punjab in 1946 which destroyed all chances of mutual goodwill and coexistence. How was it that the Congress leaders who had led the struggle for independence with enormous sacrifices and with their supposed mass appeal all over India, suddenly felt helpless and agreed to the partition of the country?

Of course, the fallacy of my statement regarding the sudden eruption of the cataclysm in the last year is obvious. The statement is only true when viewed from the day-to-day life in those years of the people in the Muslim-majority provinces of West India. Yet, in retrospect, what evokes bitter memories were the inexorable forces which had already started pushing the country to its eventual fragmentation and the shared responsibility of the three major parties to the final break-up of India.

A serious study of the events preceding the final dissection of the country clearly brings into focus the crucial part played by the British Conservative leaders to encourage and support the Muslim League, thus engineering unmitigated confrontation between the political parties with a view to destroy the unity of India.

We had seen that from 1939 onwards the British Government was totally opposed even to the promise of Dominion Status and a Constituent Assembly after the war. Nor would it encourage the political parties to join in the Central Government during the war. Had it done so, the drifting apart of the Muslim League and the Congress could have been averted and, by working together in the Central Government, it should have been possible for the two political parties to deal with national problems and to work out an agreement on the

constitutional issues concerning India's independence. But this would have been quite contrary to the ulterior designs of the British Government. Repeated persuasion by Cripps, supported by Zetland in late 1939 and early 1940 to start negotiations with Congress and Muslim League leaders, on the basis of India's right to frame her own Constitution, were opposed by the Viceroy and the Cabinet. Similarly, Amery's proposal to promise Dominion Status to India on whatever agreement the Indians might reach on a constitutional settlement, i.e. for democratic self-determination, was rejected by the Cabinet as Churchill and his Colonial Secretary, Lord Lloyd, abhorred any move that might unite Hindus and Muslims against Britain.

In addition to the references already cited Churchill's policy of "Divide and Rule" was clearly affirmed when, according to Zetland's Cabinet Memorandum dated January 31, 1940, he said that

> He did not share the anxiety to encourage and promote unity between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Such unity was, in fact, almost out of the realm of practical politics, while, if it were to be brought about, the immediate result would be that the united communities would join in showing us the door. He regarded the Hindu-Muslim feud as the bulwark of British rule in India.[1]

Similarly, Lord Linlithgow in his telegram to Lord Zetland in December 1940 said, "It is no part of our policy, I take it, to expedite in India constitutional changes for their own sake, or gratuitously to hurry the handing over of the controls to Indian hands at any pace faster than that which we regard as best calculated, on a long view, to hold India to the Empire."[2]

Thus, the British Government was determined to build up the Muslim League as a counterpoise against the Congress party's struggle for independence, and made every effort to aggravate confrontation between the two parties. Their representatives in India consistently pursued these objectives in their policies.

As a result, the British Government through its Viceroys in India had accorded recognition to Jinnah as the "sole spokesman" of the Muslims in India and had gone to the extent of declaring that any constitutional changes must be with the approval of the Muslim League. Jinnah repeatedly exercised this veto to thwart any discussions about the formation of a Central Government with the representatives of the two parties or regarding negotiations on constitutional issues.

[1] R.J. More: *Churchill, Cripps and India 1939-1945*, p. 28.
[2] Ibid., p. 26.

At the Simla Conference, for example, Jinnah nominated five Muslim members to the Executive Council, while the Congress nominated only two Hindus. (The other three were a Muslim who was the president of the Congress party, and an Indian Christian and the third was a Parsee). Jinnah aborted the conference as he would not allow the Congress party to nominate its own Muslim president as a member of the Executive. Apart from the Congress president, two other great Muslim leaders were attending the Conference as Premiers of the Muslim-majority provinces where Jinnah and the Muslim League had little influence. However, Jinnah had his way as the British supported him and wanted to boost him up as the sole representative of the Muslims of India. Sir Khizar Hayat Khan in his conversations with me had put the blame on Lord Wavell for secretly encouraging Jinnah's intransigence against all the other Hindu and Muslim leaders. In his public statements also, although his party had supported the British war effort, Sir Khizar was strongly critical of the British policy of promoting Hindu-Muslim antagonism.

The resignation of the Congress Ministries in October 1939, which Jinnah had called the "day of deliverance" and later the launching of the "Quit India" Movement with Congress leaders courting arrest, provided an ideal opportunity for the British rulers to officially strengthen the position of the Muslim League in several provinces, and the latter found the field open to rouse the Muslim masses against the Congress.

By 1945, the British had installed Muslim League Governments in Sindh, Bengal, the NWFP, and even in the Hindu-majority province of Assam. In the Punjab, also, the Muslim League had started exercising leverage in provincial politics.

The main credit for achieving Pakistan, which seemed so unreal at one time, must be given to Jinnah personally. To the Muslims of India, he projected the vision of a separate and distinct nation set apart from all other Indian communities. Muslims in different parts of India shared the same cultural traits of the Punjabis, the Uttar Pradeshis, the Biharis, the Bengalis, the Gujaratis and the Maharashtrians and spoke the same language. But Jinnah preyed on Muslim religious fears, symbolized the movement for a separate Muslim homeland in his own person, and relentlessly struggled to realize it. He was a visionary and an astute politician. The other Muslim leaders who joined him were not men of high national stature. They meekly followed Jinnah, who, along with his genuine dedication, proved too dominant and dictatorial for them. At the same time, they acknowledged that he was a man of integrity, utterly sincere and honourable. Jinnah claimed to be "the sole spokesman" of the Muslim community, and fully succeeded thanks to

British support, the mistakes of the Congress leaders, and the failures of the Premier of the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab, the North-West Frontier and Sindh to stand firmly by their secular views in which they so sincerely believed.

We have seen how as a result of the personal influence and authority which Jinnah had built up for himself with the support of the British Conservative leaders and his own implacable strategy, he aborted any plan for setting up a Central Government or proposing constitutional schemes which did not receive his personal approval. As a result, the influence of the Muslim League had started spreading to the Muslim masses though still not in the Muslim-majority provinces of North-West India.

Nehru's press statement of June 8, 1956 in Bombay elaborating Congress views on the Cabinet Mission plan was a fatal blow to the unity of India. Jinnah withdrew his acceptance of the Cabinet Plan and the League resolved to launch "Direct Action" to attain Pakistan.

Three days of large-scale communal violence in Calcutta instigated by Premier Suhrawardy of the Muslim League, with the total absence of the police and the army and the indifference of the British Governor, found the streets in the city littered with dead bodies. This proved to be the firing of that first cannonade in the war to achieve partition of the country by inciting communal hatred, large-scale violence and massacres. From Calcutta, it spread like wildfire to East Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab.

As Lord Mountbatten arrived in India on March 22, 1947, the Central Government was not functioning, the administrative machinery had collapsed, and the country was on the brink of a civil war. On June 2, 1947, Mountbatten announced the partition plan fixing August 15, 1947 as the final date for the transfer of power. Why was the date of India's independence with its partition advanced by Mountbatten by one year when the British Government had fixed June 1948 for the transfer of power? As recorded earlier, it was in London that Lord Mountbatten more than once mentioned to me that horrified at the raging civil war, the only way to restore peace, in his judgement, was to grant immediate independence and entrust the restoration of law and order to the leaders of the two Dominions.

Pakistan, it must be emphasized, was not realized as a result of self-determination by the majority of Muslims in India. It was the demand of a small minority of them seeking a new domicile congenial to their aspirations and it was realized by generating communal hatred and violence resulting in more than half a million dead, and the mass

migration of about 15 million people between India and Pakistan. Forty million Muslims remained in India.

A few months later came the Pakistani invasion of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The war in Kashmir added another dimension to the Indo-Pakistan hostility and confrontation. The resolution of the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) of August 13, 1948 could not be implemented as Pakistan, instead of withdrawing her forces, further augmented them. The hopes of those who believed that after the initial bitter memories of partition, the two independent countries would get closer were sadly belied. The result has been almost constant tension, and the wars in 1947, 1965 and 1971.

In my view, there would not have been continuous hostility and distrust between the two countries if the Government of Pakistan had also been democratic and representative. The general feelings of goodwill and cultural affinity between the peoples of both sides were so strong that the bitter experiences of the partition days were being soon pacified. A democratically elected Government in Pakistan would have been compelled to respond to these feelings and would have started at least limited social, cultural and commercial exchanges leading to improved relations between the two nations.

Immediately after independence, India had the good fortune to lay down firm foundations of democratic institutions at the national and provincial levels, and the masses, who had already been politically awakened during the long independence struggle, actively participated through political parties.

The Government had also to plan socio-economic programmes and educational objectives for the welfare of the common people, and the Prime Minister and other Ministers were made accountable to Parliament.

In Pakistan, at the very start, it was the Viceregal system which was introduced by Jinnah concentrating all authority in his person. And this leader was from Bombay, not Pakistan. Some other senior leaders after the independence of Pakistan were also from India. The struggle for Pakistan had been led by the middle classes mainly in India and had not politically awakened the masses.

The first Constitution was promulgated in March 1956, nine years after the birth of Pakistan, and even that Constitution was abrogated before elections were held, in 1958 with the imposition of Marital Law by President Iskander Mirza. Before Iskander Mirza there had been three Governors General and half a dozen Prime Ministers succeeding each other in a tussle for power, and flouting all constitutional norms.

Between 1958 and 1969, it was Md. Ayub Khan who imposed his military dictatorship by banning political parties and ruling with the support of the bureaucracy.

To strengthen the military-bureaucratic hold over the people, two lines of propaganda were constantly pursued from the very beginning. Great stress was laid on Islamic ideology and, secondly, the threat of the Hindu designs in India to destroy Pakistan was constantly propagated.

The first general elections held in December 1970 on the basis of adult franchise led to the break-up of Pakistan with the East Pakistanis launching their "Liberation Movement" and finally declaring the independence of Bangladesh, thus defying the theory that Islam could unite West and East Pakistan. Till Bhutto's assumption of office in 1971, the leadership in Pakistan had shown scant concern for evolving democratic institutions. The dominant Punjab lobby had a vested interest in perpetuating the bureaucratic-military rule, and their foreign policy thrust was to treat India as a grave threat to Pakistan's existence and to seek parity with India through military pacts and acquisition of sophisticated weapons.

The U.S.-Pakistan military aid agreement in 1954 and the other pacts that followed fulfilled Pakistan's objective of achieving parity with India. Unlike the U.S., Pakistan did not at all share the perception of the threat of the Soviet Communist expansion. Her sole aim was to confront India. Pakistan could as a result of the military pacts feel confident of dealing with India from a position of strength, and could also count on U.S. support against India in international forums. The American military alliance set the course for tensions and conflicts in the following years, especially with India following the policy of non-alignment.

The Pakistan rulers have throughout been opposed to free contacts, communications, and open exchanges between the two peoples. Quite understandably, they have been worried about the impact upon Pakistani visitors to India of democratic institutions, freedom of speech, and other individual rights as practised in India. Besides, the incessant propaganda about India's hostility and aggressive designs, inciting hatred against her, would have been belied by the warmth of friendship, generous hospitality and strong cultural and emotional bonds experienced by the visitors from one country to the other. There had been even greater opposition to anything like commercial relations and industrial and technical cooperation which could have forged strong links between the two countries. The most glaring illustration of all this was the Pakistan Government's flouting the solemn pledges

made in the Tashkent Declaration for normalization of relations between the two countries in various fields. Within two months, President Ayub and Foreign Minister Bhutto rejected all our proposals for promoting movement of peoples, and establishing cultural, commercial and economic relations between the two countries. The argument advanced by Bhutto, and to which President Ayub had meekly agreed, was that unless the Kashmir question was resolved to Pakistan's satisfaction, there could be no question of restoring normal relations between the two countries. The Pakistan leaders knew very well that no such condition had been laid down in the Tashkent Declaration, and the two Heads of Government had agreed to establish good-neighbourly relations setting aside the Kashmir dispute.

The experience after the Simla Agreement also proved disappointing though there was every reason at that time to hope for better bilateral relations. Appreciating the traumatic effect on Pakistan of national disintegration, the Indian side met all President Bhutto's demands, including return of the prisoners of war, no trials for war criminals, the return of the Pakistani territories, mutual commitment to a durable peace, and bilateral cooperation. Yet after the agreement it took two years before air flights could be resumed and four years for diplomatic relations to be restored. This, despite the fact that Bhutto had given a democratic Constitution to the people of Pakistan for the first time, and had emerged as the national leader through fair and free elections. However, we soon found that Bhutto returned both to his autocratic ways in Pakistan and confrontationist attitudes towards India.

Since all efforts to normalize relations between India and Pakistan through their bilateral negotiations had failed, could not they, I often wondered, come closer to each other within a system of regional cooperation? In regional planning, they would have to set aside their distrust and disputes and work together for regional peace and prosperity. Some of my personal experiences encouraged this hope.

As early as 1950, when I was at the Indian military Mission in Berlin, I witnessed the moving historic event of the inauguration of the Schuman Plan under the inspiration of Jean Monnet's statesmanship. The erstwhile warring nations of Western Europe had ended their hostilities, and had agreed to pool their steel and coal resources as a first step towards the European Economic Community. With the passage of time, all barriers went down with the free movement of peoples and goods and with coordinated economic, commercial and financial policies and a common security concept. Today, the European Community commands the respect of the world.

Why could not India and Pakistan, I have often asked, along with other neighbours, overcome the past distrust and animosities and form a South Asian regional association? Thereby, they could actively cooperate in economic, commercial, technological and cultural fields for the peace and progress of all their peoples. This certainly would have had a positive impact on the Indo-Pakistan bilateral relations, marred as they were by hatred and hostility.

The South Asian nations, one had to remember, had a much stronger basis for close regional friendship and cooperation. The European nations had strong ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences, and a history of centuries of wars leading to untold deaths and destruction. Within years of World War II, when more than 15 million people had died, they rose above their bitter experiences and displayed rare vision and statesmanship to build up a European Community.

No family of nations is so closely bound together as the countries of South Asia with almost a unique and distinct identity of their own. Their close geographical location without any natural barriers, their ethnic, cultural and linguistic affinities and more than 2,000 years of shared history with free communications make these nations a closely knit family with a special personality. Whatever the post-independence vicissitudes, and in spite of them, the peoples of this region share a strong feeling of belonging to one family of nations, notwithstanding the political propaganda to create distrust and hostility.

Later as Ambassador to Stockholm (1958-62), I observed the functioning of the Nordic Council cooperation among the Scandinavian countries. There is unhindered movement of peoples and active economic, commercial, and cultural cooperation, with the Ministers of the four countries constantly in contact with each other. On international issues, they take decisions by mutual consultations and their delegations to the U.N. General Assembly hold joint discussions for a couple of days to work out a consensus before going to New York. We from India and Pakistan, on the contrary, go to the international forums often to criticize and condemn each other on bilateral issues.

On several occasions between 1958 and 1962, I held forth on the example of Nordic cooperation with my colleagues in the Ministry of External Affairs, and once I presumptuously dilated upon it with Prime Minister Nehru during the Finnish Prime Minister's visit to New Delhi. Nehru listened patiently without admonishing me for my naivete for not appreciating that, despite his efforts, Pakistan was more interested in foreign military alliances to confront India than in cooperation. I had

also to bear in mind that he had offered a "no war pact" to Pakistan and had settled the Indus Water dispute to Pakistan's satisfaction.

While regional cooperation organizations were functioning among neighbouring countries in various continents, it was a matter of shame that in South Asia with its common heritage and millennia old civilization neither the Foreign Ministers nor the Heads of Government had sat together around the same table during the previous thirty-two years.

The announcement by President Ziaur Rahman in 1980 after preliminary consultations, proposing regional cooperation between the South Asian nations was thus a highly commendable and long overdue initiative. The objectives agreed upon by the seven countries—India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives—were to promote collective self-reliance and accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region, thus promoting the welfare and the quality of life of the people of South Asia.

Encouraged by the happy experiences in other regions, one had hoped that through firm commitments and by gradual stages, the countries of South Asia would be able to work together for the objectives of economic cooperation, industrial and technological collaboration as well as for extensive commercial and cultural exchanges for the peace and prosperity of their peoples. As a consequence, all these developments would have simultaneously created the climate of trust which could have led to resolution of disputes and tensions and to promotion of political understandings and a common security concept. Indo-Pakistan relations, I had hoped, would greatly improve with their joint cooperation in various activities.

Soon, however, we found that such expectations were highly unrealistic. The statements of the Foreign Ministers at their meetings in 1983 and 1984 stressed the objectives of peace, stability and prosperity of the region based on friendship and solidarity among the member states. But, side by side with these rhetorical pronouncements, the Integrated Programme of Action (IPA) and their decisions had severely restricted the scope of South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC). To start with, great stress was laid on development of telecommunications and air transport between all the countries. Technical committees were also set up for Meteorological, Archaeological and Agricultural research, and for promotion of Sports, Arts and Culture.

What was obvious in the proposed programme was the specific exclusion of the more vital areas of cooperation which would have led to constant contacts and communications between industrial and

business leaders, among technologists, and academics, and free movement of the peoples thus arousing their awareness and winning their enthusiastic support. The exclusion of political and bilateral issues from the SAARC discussions also seemed unfortunate as that would rule out the opportunities of frank exchanges to gradually build up good understanding on controversial questions. At the same time, I could appreciate that with the past experiences, any discussions on the bilateral contentious issues would have generated so much of bitter controversy, that cooperation even in other areas of common interest would have been thwarted.

The exclusion from the SAARC IPA of trade, industry, technological exchanges, and planning reduced the cooperation to a very low level. Without committing the member countries themselves to extensive trade relations between themselves, the agreement only provides for joint action in international forums, such as discussions on the New International Economic order and the GATT meetings. Instead of active South Asian regional cooperation helping resolve tensions and disputes, it is the latter that are thwarting wide-ranging cooperation.

Epilogue

Pakistan after Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto

As anticipated by me at the time, General Zia's coup again ushered in a long period of military dictatorship. His crafty promise of general elections definitely within three months of the coup was superseded by an equally guileful promise to hold elections after nine months, even going to the extent of giving an undertaking to the Supreme Court to that effect. The reason advanced was that the election could be held only after the trial of Bhutto, who was executed on April 4, 1979 despite the fervent appeals by many foreign Heads of Government. Zia again wriggled out of his commitments of early elections by imposing a "provisional constitution" in March 1981, which precluded any challenge to his martial law in any court. This Constitution also took away fundamental rights and the right to form political parties.

All this time, he retained his position as Chief of the Army Staff, thus securing the support of the army, while assuming the Presidentship of Pakistan.

His resort to Islamization and alliance with Jamait-i-Islami helped him secure a semblance of legitimacy. By his appeal to fundamentalism, and by projecting himself as the true guardian of the faith, he was able to arouse religious passions against any political dissent. To strengthen his absolute control over the civil administration, the army top brass were appointed to all the important positions in the bureaucracy. Besides, the powers of the judiciary had also been curtailed by the setting up of Shariat Courts to enforce Islamic tenets. All in all, he proved to be a remarkable political manipulator, and was able to establish his authoritarian rule by eliminating and silencing all political rivals.

General Zia's spurious referendum in ostensibly seeking approval of his Islamization programme was, in fact and more importantly, to get himself confirmed as President of Pakistan for the next five years. In Pakistan, this rigged referendum was met with general revulsion and hostility while the reaction abroad was one of disillusionment. Equally

scandalous was the manipulation of the general elections held on non-party basis requiring all candidates to declare that they were not members of any political party nor had they been ever so in the past. To Zia's discomfiture, both the elected members of the Assembly and his Prime Minister, Junejo, even under these circumscribed conditions, started asserting their democratic rights and demanded the lifting of the Martial Law.

With Zia's prestige sinking low domestically, the demands for free election on a multi-party basis by Ms. Benazir Bhutto and the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD, which included the PPP and seven other political parties) had electrified the people. To stem the mass agitation, Zia announced that general elections would be held on November 16, 1988.

Relations with India during General Zia's Regime

On September 15, 1981, General Zia suddenly made an offer of a "no war pact" with India. This was surprising as we had repeatedly offered such a pact during the past thirty years every time to be rejected by Pakistan. I also felt that there was something very odd about the manner in which this offer was communicated. Instead of addressing a formal diplomatic communication to the Government of India, this offer was appended to the 3.2 billion-dollar military and economic package by the U.S. to Pakistan which also included super sophisticated F16 planes. Though belatedly, the offer was later made formally by the Pakistan Foreign Minister.

Soon thereafter, what generated strong adverse reaction in India was the uncalled for attack on India by the Pakistani representative, Agha Hilaly, at an international conference. He condemned India for denying self-determination to the people of Kashmir and had the audacity to compare it with the situation of the Palestinians and the Namibians. As a result, India called off the next stage of negotiations. While India's strong resentment was understandable, was it wise to suspend negotiations of such crucial importance to the future of peace and goodwill between the two countries?

In any case, our Government should have warmly welcomed the "no war pact" proposal as a reaffirmation of our oft-repeated commitment to peace and friendship with Pakistan. We vacillated and criticized to the disappointment of that large civilian constituency in Pakistan who wanted friendly cooperation with India. I fully agreed with the observation of an eminent journalist, who wrote at that time ". . . from September last year to January this year, what

assurance did we project to this constituency that by rejecting the offer of General Zia we were not rejecting peace with Pakistan?"[1]

While reacting favourably to Pakistan's proposals, India's Prime Minister made an even more far-reaching counter-offer of a treaty of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. It required earnest negotiations on both the proposals to find at least a common ground to promote peace, goodwill and cooperation and Indo-Pakistan relations for which Pakistan had taken the initiative.

It must also be admitted that some of the provisions of the Indian proposals to Pakistan, such as restrictions on her buying of arms or to grant of bases to any foreign power, could not possibly be acceptable to Pakistan. Our failure to agree to a straightforward "no-war pact" as we had ourselves proposed so often, had cast a serious reflection on the sincerity of our intentions. Such a pact would have led to greater mutual trust between the two peoples and would have, perhaps, opened up possibilities of more agreements for confidence-building and cooperation.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister Agha Shahi's proposal of a no-war pact including mutual reduction of armed forces and mutual inspection of nuclear installations had offered a great opportunity for a new era of genuine trust and cooperation in our bilateral relations. Some of the reasonings advanced on the Indian side were typical of our relentless suspicion against Pakistan even while conceding our past bitter experiences. There are moments in history when statesmanship should rise above implacable bitterness to seize the opportunity of opening up new vistas. The Indian side distrusted Pakistan's friendly offer alleging that it was a ploy to win U.S. approval for more arms. We expected Pakistan to agree to restrictions on the purchases of arms by her while we have never accepted similar restrictions ourselves. As a matter of fact, we have always raised strong protests whenever Pakistan sought more sophisticated weapons as if we have a right to exercise a veto. Neither Government has such a right and India by such protests only increases Pakistan's innate fear of what they constantly allege as India's hegemonistic ambitions. Unless proposals like the no-war pact and the reduction of troops are agreed to, the arms race will continue and neither party has the right to question the other about its arms purchases according to its own national security perceptions.

Even the Pakistani suggestion for troop reductions was considered by the Indian Government as a "trap" which it was difficult to

[1] Pran Chopra, "Unheard Voices" in Pran Chopra (ed.), *Contemporary Pakistan: New Aims and Images*, 1983.

understand unless Pakistan wanted India to make a disproportionate concession which India could have refused as a result of discussions which never took place.

Another important development was the setting up of the Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission in 1983 which also failed to fulfil its promise of active cooperation in trade, communications, tourism and cultural exchanges, in spite of some initial hopes. There was no real advance in trade relations or in the fields of information, cultural exchanges or tourism.

A serious cause of embittering Indo-Pak relations these years were the Indian allegations of Pakistan's hand in the terrorist activities in the Punjab. The Government of India repeatedly took up this matter with the Pakistan Government pointing out evidence of training camps and supply of arms by Pakistan to the Sikh terrorists in the Punjab. The confessions by the captured terrorists had amply confirmed Pakistan's complicity and encouragement. On the Pakistani side, accusations were levelled against India of supporting the MRD (Movement for Restoration of Democracy) because of the statements by some Indian leaders in favour of democracy in Pakistan.

With the occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet forces in December 1979, the United States needed Pakistan's strategic cooperation for cross-border insurgency operations as a front-line State. To General Zia it was a godsend to get large financial aid and military supplies ($3.2 billion as a six-year package) which further helped him in consolidating his stern military control over the administration and any political activities.

The arms and food supplies to the Mujahidin fighting against the Afghan Government and the Soviet army were channelled through Pakistan. This provided the Pakistan authorities the opportunity of clandestinely diverting substantial military equipment to its own arsenals which even came in for criticism in the U.S. Congress circles.

At the same time, the people of Pakistan were faced with the influx of nearly 3 million Afghan refugees which was having a serious impact on the economic and cultural life and the law and order situation in the frontier districts.

Claims and counter claims and some clashes between India and Pakistan on the Siachen glacier in Ladakh nearly 15,000 foot high in the Himalayas added yet another area of confrontation between the two countries.

Advent of Democracy in Pakistan

When General Zia-ul-Haq died in an aircrash on August 17, 1988, there were serious fears about the direction that Pakistani politics might take after that tragedy. Would not the army, which had wielded political power for so long in Pakistan's history, feel tempted to intervene on the plea of ensuring the stability of the nation with the sudden death of the military Head of State? General Zia-ul-Haq had fixed November 16 for the general elections of compliant legislators. Who would immediately succeed Zia-ul-Haq, and would the elections be held on the date and on the bases laid down by him? There could also be uncertainty about the role Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Chairman of the Senate, would play to encourage democratic or authoritarian trends at that juncture, bearing in mind the posture of the Army High Command.

Some immediate developments strengthened the hopes of the people of Pakistan who had been yearning for democracy for so long. The first was the immediate resumption of power as acting President by Ghulam Ishaq Khan, which conveyed a clear message that the transfer of power was taking place in a constitutional manner, and that the danger of immediate military intervention had been averted. On the same day, the acting President announced his firm commitment to democracy and also expressed his Government's determination to fulfil all its responsibilities to hold free, fair and impartial elections. An even more reassuring announcement was by Chief of the Army that the army would not intervene in politics, and that the latter was the sole prerogative of the political leaders. He even indicated that the army would strictly discharge its responsibility for the security and integrity of the nation.

In regard to the forthcoming elections, the chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party had already filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court pleading that the Government of Pakistan should be required to hold elections on a multi-party basis. On October 22, the Supreme Court issued instructions that the November 16 elections should be held on party basis so that every political party would be eligible to participate in the elections. The Federal Government accepted this decision on the same day.

Ms. Bhutto's Regime

Ms. Benazir Bhutto's election victory in December 1988, albeit with a very narrow majority of 12 votes, was widely welcomed in India and abroad. She had come to power through a truly democratic verdict of the people—something rare in Pakistan's history—and had replaced

the eleven years of rule of the military dictator. That she had suffered relentless persecution for years under Zia's regime, while remaining steadfastly committed to the cause of democracy, had also won her great sympathy and admiration. Rejecting Zia's ploy of Islamic fundamentalism, the people of Pakistan had elected a modem, Western-educated woman as their Prime Minister. Pakistan's friends rightly pointed out with pride that she was the first woman Head of Government in the Islamic world.

In India, her commitment to democracy and her programmes of promoting the socio-economic welfare of the masses in Pakistan received very favourable attention. However, what raised the highest expectations in India were her positive statements about improving Indo-Pak relations and resolving all differences in the spirit of the Simla Agreement. She had said before that "the MRD accepted the idea of marrying the peace, friendship and cooperation treaty with a no-war pact. It undertakes to maximize trade, economic and cultural cooperation with India. It will endeavour to convert the Indo-Pakistan border into a soft one like the one between Canada and USA."[2]

With the emergence of democracy in Pakistan under the leadership of Ms. Bhutto, one could see better prospects of normalization of relations between India and Pakistan. During Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Pakistan in December 1988, the two Prime Ministers had intensive discussions and found common ground to improve bilateral relations. Ms. Bhutto reaffirmed her commitment to resolve all bilateral problems within the framework of the Simla Agreement.

At the end of the talks three important agreements were signed fortifying the hopes of more friendly and cooperative relations. Two agreements related to the avoidance of double taxation and the promotion of cultural exchanges and the third one, very important for confidence building, was the pact against attacking each other's nuclear installations.

As already mentioned, the majority obtained by the PPP was narrow and the province of Punjab had come under the majority rule of the opposition party—Islamic Jamhuri Ittehad (also called Islamic Democratic Alliance) On the plus side, the armed forces had certainly conducted themselves in an admirable manner in the restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

Ms. Bhutto found growing threats to her Government's authority due to the small majority in the Assembly and the opposition majority in the Senate. The more portentous was the hostility of the

[2]Benazir Bhutto: *Pakistan, the Gathering Storm*, p. 71.

Chief Minister of the Punjab, Nawaz Sharif, whose party had formed the Government in that province after inflicting a defeat on Ms. Bhutto's party. There was frequent confrontation over the provincial and central jurisdiction on some issues, to the serious embarrassment of the Prime Minister.

The serious blow being dealt by the Punjab Government's opposition to Prime Minister Bhutto's authority could be well appreciated when one bore in mind that this province had 63 per cent of the country's population and had a large share in the economic and political structure of the nation. The role of the Punjab in the army and the senior civil services was also crucial as the Punjabis constituted 75 and 85 per cent respectively of these services.

From all accounts, President Ishaq Khan and the Chief of the Army Staff, General Aslam Beg, had started having their own reservations on Ms. Bhutto's handling of the country's political and administrative challenges. Along with this, one heard of the increasing rumours from Pakistan of the corruption in the Prime Minister's inner circle including her close family members.

Serious ethnic violence has plagued the province of Sindh for the past five years between the Muhajirs, those Muslims who migrated to Pakistan from India in 1947, and the native Sindhis. Sindh being Ms. Bhutto's home province, and with her PPP Government in power, deteriorating law and order situation there has been a blow to her prestige. There were growing apprehensions that her Government might not last long.

With her deteriorating political prestige, and the army's strong position as a centre of power, Ms. Bhutto's attitude towards India had been showing a marked change. As in similar political situations in the past, the Kashmir issue was brought to the forefront, and threats of India's aggressive designs and a tough stand to teach India a lesson were being widely propagated to win the approval of the army and the opposition parties.

With the insurgency in the Kashmir Valley, the Pakistan Government and the opposition leaders have been openly supporting the terrorists by raising funds for them and by providing them with training facilities and weapons. Such downright interference in India's internal affairs has led to serious tension on the frontiers. They have been also making all-out efforts to internationalize the issue and seek the support of the Islamic countries. Following in the footsteps of her father, Ms. Bhutto went to the extent of threatening India with 1000 years of war. India's reaction to these belligerent speeches was strong warnings of disastrous consequences for Pakistan if India became the

victim of aggression. The Indian Prime Minister, in reply to Ms. Bhutto's threat, publicly warned that Pakistan should realize that instead of 1000 years of war, it would take less than 1000 hours for Pakistan's destruction.

Whatever Ms. Bhutto's political compulsions, and everybody realized that her authority was being challenged by strong opposition parties and the ethnic war in Sindh, her Government's interference in the Kashmir insurgency, its efforts to wriggle out of the Simla Agreement, and her own aggressive statements against India had come as a shock to those in India who had hoped that she would, for the first time in Pakistan's history, prove to be a more responsible and wise democratic leader dedicated to the welfare of the Pakistani masses and to peaceful cooperation with India.

Any conflict between India and Pakistan could only lead to large-scale destruction in both countries, with their arsenals of highly sophisticated weapons and especially with the danger of nuclear attacks. Sanity demands that both sides must stop threatening postures, pull back their troops, and start official negotiations. After a more than forty-year history of hatred, hostility and conflicts, one hopes these two fraternal countries would have at least learnt that they have no choice but to resolve their differences by a political dialogue and diplomatic negotiations. The two Governments could thus ensure peace and prosperity for their peoples which they ardently desire by mutual cooperation. We should also learn from what has happened between USSR and USA and between Eastern and Western Europe during the past three years. There the ideological barriers have crumbled, there is a free movement of the peoples, and the old military confrontation is giving way to peaceful cooperation. It is high time for India and Pakistan to give up exploiting each other's ethnic, regional or religious crises, to stop the arms race, and to use these resources for the economic and social welfare of their peoples.

Pakistan while interfering in India's domestic affairs in the name of Islam, must remain agonizingly aware that, despite being an Islamic country, vast sections of the Muslims there are unhappy and are fighting among themselves on communal and regional issues. The Muhajirs, for example, who migrated to Pakistan in 1947, are still subjected to discrimination and are victims of continuous communal violence.

Besides, Pakistan must not forget that there are more than 85 million Muslims in India, a number larger than in Pakistan. Secular India will not tolerate communal propaganda by Pakistan being carried

on in Kashmir and abroad and its backlash would affect the peace and security of India's large Muslim population.

India-Pakistan Friendship Society

Many of us in India had become convinced that we must set up a non-official organization which could invite cultural, academic, commercial, industrial, and sports delegations from Pakistan, and could send similar delegations from India. This, we felt, would be the best way to break down the official barriers created between the two countries. We could encourage constant Indo-Pakistan dialogue by exchanging press delegations and by holding regular seminars. More than a hundred leading personalities of Delhi responded warmly to this suggestion and we formed an India-Pakistan Friendship Society of which I agreed to be. the Chairman. The founding members included former Ambassadors, leading journalists, a retired Supreme Court Judge, members of the academic and legal professions, and well-known industrialists and businessmen. What particularly encouraged us was that the Pakistan Government had agreed to send a cultural delegation led by their famous singer Farida Khanum for the inauguration of the function.

The inauguration ceremony of June 3, 1988, was attended by more than a thousand people including the Pakistani diplomats. However, we soon started receiving signals of disappointment. The Pakistan Government gave no encouragement to the formation of a similar Pakistan-India Friendship Society in Pakistan which would have helped us in jointly planning programmes of exchanges of delegations or holding of seminars and discussions. The non-official visitors who came on their own warmly appreciated the receptions they received from the Friendship Society and expressed enthusiasm for setting up a similar society in Pakistan. After some time, it became clear that even important publicmen, in spite of their keenness to form a friendship society in Pakistan, could not do so without the official approval which was not forthcoming.

Despite these disappointments from the Pakistani side, we have continued our efforts. We were encouraged by the reactions of the people in each country to the visits of the delegations from the other. Hundreds of visitors who went to Pakistan came back deeply moved by the warmth of friendship and generous hospitality they received from the people of Pakistan. The same was the experience of the Pakistani visitors to India. The strong emotions which cultural and linguistic links aroused was demonstrated in New Delhi when we

invited the renowned singer Ghulam Ali from Pakistan for a concert at the Siri Fort Auditorium in mid-February 1990. The hall, with a capacity of more than one thousand, was packed and people sat in the aisles and on the floor; others stood outside listening to the loudspeaker. There was repeated applause and insistent demands for more favourite songs. That evening showed how emotionally the two peoples feel close to each other.

In early 1990, as there was mounting tension between the two countries with the insurgency in Kashmir and Pakistan leaders publicly having declared full support to the terrorists in Kashmir, we in the Society felt that a meeting between some of the top leaders of the two countries could help in defusing the tension. Accordingly, I invited some well-known leaders of the various political parties in Pakistan to visit New Delhi as our guests and have three days of political dialogue behind closed doors with their counterparts in India to understand each other's point of view and to consider ways of averting the impending conflict. Unfortunately, I received no acknowledgement from any of the leaders.

Similarly, a conference arranged well in advance with the Pakistan specialists by the Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, had to be cancelled at the last moment as the Pakistani delegation expressed its inability to come to India.

Happily, there was one exception in response to the invitation by Dr. Pai Panandiker of the Centre for Policy Research. A five-member Pakistani delegation visited New Delhi which included Dr. Mubashir Hasan, former Federal Minister, Nisar Usmani, vice-president, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Professor Jabed Ahmad, Ms. Naseem and Mrs. Asma Jehangir. We had very frank and useful exchange of views on the Indo-Pak relations at a meeting organized by our India-Pakistan Friendship Society. They also had wide-ranging discussions at the Centre for Policy Research and at the India International Centre. All those who participated in these meetings acutely realized how very essential it is to have such exchanges between the two countries.

I earnestly hope the time will come when there will be wide-ranging exchanges between the two countries with the formation of a similar society in Pakistan.

In the past months, there had been growing signs of political instability in Pakistan. The ethnic violence in Sindh led to sharp differences between Ms. Bhutto and the Army Chief, Aslam Beg, as the army had not been given necessary powers to deal with the

disorders and the violence. President Ishaq had also been highly critical of Ms. Bhutto's handling of the situation in Sindh and of her general administration of the country. Equally strong had been the attacks by the IJI (Islamic Jamuhiriya Ittehad) party of the Punjab. Along with all this, the persistent accusations of rampant corruption against Ms. Bhutto and her husband had seriously tarnished her image. In the mounting political confusion, the people in Pakistan were getting disillusioned with the high hopes of the restoration of democracy raised following the November 1988 elections.

On August 8, President Ishaq dismissed the Benazir Government and dissolved the National Assembly. He described his action as commitment to democracy and to preserve the integrity and stability of Pakistan, since Ms. Bhutto had lost the confidence of the people. Ms. Bhutto criticized it as a "constitutional coup d'etat."

In the elections held on October 24, IJI secured a big majority winning 105 seats while the PPP was routed securing only 45 seats. As a result, Mian Nawaz Sharif, the leader of the IJI, assumed the office of the Prime Minister. Ms. Bhutto alleged that there had been massive rigging of elections.

What Chance, Indo-Pak Amity?

Among the developments in Indo-Pakistan relations, there had been three meetings of the Foreign Secretaries and one read the usual euphemistic pronouncements of "cordial atmosphere" and positive efforts towards "confidence building."

In spite of that, during the past months Pakistan missed no opportunity of placing the solution of Kashmir dispute as a condition-precedent of normalization. This was the stratagem adopted even after the solemn commitments in the Tashkent Declaration and the Simla Agreement. At the second meeting of the Foreign Secretaries in August 1990, the Pakistan Foreign Secretary went to the extent of saying that Kashmir was the core and the central issue and unless it was settled, there could be no progress in normalization.

On October 29, Nawaz Sharif said that top priority should be given to the Kashmir issue. Again on November 7, he said that for good ties with India, the Kashmir question should be resolved according to the UN resolutions and spoke of Pakistan's full support to the Kashmiris' right to self-determination.

Similarly, at the meeting in the third week of December in Islamabad, Nawaz Sharif was reported to have told India's Foreign Secretary, Muchkund Dubey, to tackle all issues, especially Kashmir.

Why is the Kashmir issue being raked up as a roadblock to normalization of relations and to friendly cooperation between the countries? When talking of the UN resolutions, Pakistan must recall that it was the UN resolution on August 13, 1948 which was accepted by both the parties and which Pakistan failed to honour. Instead of withdrawing her troops and the invaders from the state of Kashmir, as required by the resolution and agreed to by Pakistan, she had sent heavy reinforcements which had been criticized by the UNCIP. By flouting the UN resolution, a clear signal was given by Pakistan that she would not accept the plebiscite under the UN conditions. The history of the next forty years is well known.

How was it in keeping with the UN resolutions that Pakistan had integrated the "Pakistan-occupied Kashmir" and Bhutto had even installed the PPP Government in 1975 when this party had no previous support there? This was a clear acceptance by Pakistan that the final solution lay somewhere along the "line of actual control" and neither party had a right to interfere in the internal affairs of the party on the other side of this line.

Regarding Pakistan's insistence upon always raising the Kashmir issue, I am often reminded of the following words of President Kennedy to a Pakistan Ambassador as quoted by Anthony Mascarenhas:

> "Mr. Ambassador, I think, your country is more concerned with the Kashmir dispute, than it is with Kashmir."[4]

In India, we had been convinced over the decades that the Pakistan leaders are bent upon keeping the Kashmir issue alive for domestic reasons and to block any friendly communications and cooperation between the two countries. Those were the lessons learnt after the Tashkent Declaration, the Simla Agreement and a number of other optimistic joint declarations. Even the commitment to resolve the issue bilaterally is dishonoured by Pakistan by approaches to the Islamic Conferences and by raising the issue at the UN.

We have also been reading with some satisfaction about the agreements to give notice to each other of the troops movements and not to violate each other's air space. Yet, during the last six months, there have been several reports of cross-firing on the Indo-Pakistan border. For example, there were press reports about the heavy skirmishes in KEL Sector on the Kashmir border and of massive

[4]Mascarenhas: *Rape of Bangla Desh*, p. 12.

artillery duels for nearly six weeks there. Later press reports in Pakistan mentioned the death of two Indian Field Commanders in KEL skirmishes. There have also been clashes in the Tithwal sector.

The Pakistani complaint is that the Indian troops are too close to the line of actual control. But how can India withdraw these troops when Pakistan has been giving support to the insurgency in Kashmir by training the terrorists, by supply of arms, by promising large funds and by open public statements of support to the insurgents? Similarly, on the Punjab border there have been complaints from the Indian side of the training of Sikh terrorists in Pakistan and of supply of arms to them. One has also been reading serious complaints from the Pakistani side about running of training camps for terrorists in Sindh and of India's plot to create disorder in Pakistan.

We do not, therefore, see prospects of reduction of tension on the India-Pakistan border with the present blinkered vision of the two Governments. Pakistan has no right to proclaim support for the Kashmiris or for the Muslims in India. They are India's internal matter. Similarly, India has no business to support the demands for ethnic autonomy in Sindh and Baluchistan.

India has its own problems in Kashmir and in the Punjab and she must settle them by negotiations and by dealing firmly with the insurgents and the terrorists without Pakistan adding fuel to the fire. Lack of restraint from Pakistan could force some parties in India to retaliate in one form or another.

Again it is a sad commentary on the cordiality of our relations that the diplomats of each country are being harassed in the other. It is shameful that each Government thinks that the diplomats of the other are indulging in some sort of subversive activities instead of promoting goodwill and friendship between the two peoples.

An observer cannot escape the conclusion that the two Governments are neither showing the indomitable desire nor the courage and the vision to lay the firm foundation of a long-term friendship and cooperation in accordance with the aspirations of the two peoples. This they would do if only they stopped interfering in each other's internal affairs and took bold steps to promote economic, cultural and commercial exchanges, abolishing the visa system and allowing the people to meet their friends and relations in both countries.

While a visitor from distant Argentina or Peru can get a visa without difficulty, the Indian and Pakistani citizens have to sleep on the pavements for days and days before a visa is given to them, if at all. And on their arrival in the other country, they must report to the police

as if they were criminals rather than people who yearn to visit their brothers and sisters and friends.

As in other continents, India and Pakistan as close neighbours working together in economic, commercial, technological, industrial and scientific fields for mutual benefit could become a superpower in the world. But unfortunately that vision continues to elude them.

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